

# THE REFORMED CHURCH REVIEW

---

NO. 4.—OCTOBER, 1901.

---

## I.

### DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY CONSISTENT WITH HUMAN FREEDOM.

BY PROFESSOR JACOB COOPER, D.C.L., LL.D.

This is the fundamental question of theology. It has perpetually divided the Church into two parties which seem impossible of reconciliation, and has been the cause of more bitter controversy than any other question of doctrine. The more strictly orthodox, as well as the more severely logical, have maintained the absolute sovereignty of God; and along with this view have been wont to exalt the divine personality, making Him indeed All in All. This view has embraced the most consecrated in thought, the most devoted in spirit, and most active in good works. Strange as it may appear, the less power was allowed to man, the more he exercised himself in duty; the nearer nothing he became before the awful presence of an absolute Sovereign, the more exalted he actually shows himself in his person and work. On the contrary, those who attempted to lessen the distance between the Creator and His creature—that is, the more power, the wider the sphere of action, and apparent incentive to duty were claimed, the feebler the effort and the less reverence in its exercise. It is true that those who enlarged the sphere of man's power would not admit that they narrowed the attributes

of the Supreme Ruler. But, between direct opposites, it is an undeniable truth that the more you take from one quantity the less that leaves to it; and the more you add to the other, the greater the difference between them. And this becomes more conspicuous if what is added to the one be taken from the other. This is not any more true in pure quantity than in concrete nature, whether that be material or spiritual. Hence the statement is unanswerable that if we exalt God's prerogative we are disposed to honor Him accordingly; and if we add to the self-sufficiency of man we diminish his reverence for anything but himself. If, therefore, we exalt God and humiliate man we will increase the reverence and desire of the creature to walk humbly, and obey the divine commands: while the reverse process will have the contrary effect. This may be seen in the different systems of heathenism, where the gods are both in fashion and character like those who made them—a result to be expected; since the thing made cannot be better than the maker. If the gods have the passions and weaknesses of men, they will also exhibit the same kind of misconduct. And such is a matter of veritable record in the poetical, the ethical and the religious writing of the heathen world; and made so conspicuous that it needs no argument in proof.

The same tendency may be seen amongst those who acknowledge the God of the Sacred Scriptures, but interpret His character to suit their own notions of the dignity of human nature. This will be a varying estimate; ranging all the way from a complete acknowledgment of the Divine Sovereignty down to the low view that man is self-sufficient for all his work, and therefore needs no help from God. Man's religion then becomes self-worship, and his creed egoism. Between the most degraded heathen who make gods to suit themselves, and those nominal theists who make themselves to suit God, there is little to choose. And for either the question before us can offer little or no difficulty. But for those who acknowledge an Infinite God—such as is revealed in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures—there has been an honest diversity of opinion, which has divided the Church into camps

often in actual warfare with each other ; always, even when most honest and fair-minded, exhibiting views seemingly irreconcilable. For if God be absolutely sovereign He will control either directly or indirectly all the actions of His creature ; and there will be nothing left for him to do but obey the law of his being as necessarily as though he were merely a link in the chain of material forces. This view when carried to its logical consequence is Fatality, as may be seen daily in Islamism. On this theory man is merely a member of a causal nexus which acts from necessity. His destiny is all fixed from the beginning, and he has nothing whatever to do with choice or modification by his actions. The objection to this view is not hard to see ; that is, it leaves him no responsibility and consequently nothing to do. This has been urged with tremendous force by those who maintain freedom of action as the basis of all virtue and vice, guilt and innocence. And certainly when pushed to its extreme consequence lands in antinomianism, where the conduct of men becomes indifferent for the obvious reason that they act under compulsion. If this be the system of divine government there seems to be no escape from the abhorrent doctrine that God is the author of sin ; that man is created to be miserable in this world as a sinner, and damned through eternity in obedience to a decree of an arbitrary sovereign who is as unreasonable as he is cruel. While there have been not a few of those who hold to the most reverential interpretation of divine revelation, whose creed, when carried to its logical consequences, would lead to this awful result, yet in practice this has seldom been the case. Few thinkers, even of the highest order, are consistent with themselves ; and so those who are antinomian in theory are rarely, if ever, such in practice. Nay, even the most advanced in the doctrine of divine sovereignty have acted as though they had the power, and were the most anxious to please their dread master. Nor are they consistent who believe that man is endowed with freedom because he is told his duty and commanded to perform it. For while this involves a power on his part to meet the requisition, or an absurdity as well as cruelty in Him who commands his creature to do that which he is ut-

terly unable to perform, yet those who hold this view seek help from God and profess to be saved by His grace.

The difficulty is in the truth common to both extreme views; and as a philosophical idea is as incapable of explanation on one basis as the other. For if man has unlimited power he can not only transgress with impunity, but can thwart the divine purpose; can even revolutionize the moral universe. For he can sin to the full limit of his desire, can make his character as depraved as it is capable, and yet face about, reverse both the trend of his conduct and its influence on the world; then escape punishment by his own unaided effort. Such a view is supremely absurd from the standpoint of pure reason, and has a most harmful influence upon the character of such as act according to it. Since if it be possible for a man to work out his own deliverance unassisted, the *raison d'être* for revelation does not exist. For religion is thus embraced in a self-sufficient morality; and man can rebel to any extent and then make his own terms of pardon. This flatters human nature, and is therefore attractive to loose ideas of morality; but in its results shows most clearly the helplessness of man when unaided by a higher power.

There is a second general view which, avoiding the two extremes noticed, accepts both divine sovereignty and human freedom. This appeals to *à priori* evidence for the character of God as the creator and absolute ruler, as well as the declarations of every system of revealed religion. If God be the creator whose plan antedated the foundation of the world, and whose unaided power and will realized the plan, then everything made, material as well as immaterial, has its roots in the divine ordinances.

Whether the pantheistic or transcendent view be taken of the personality the result does not differ. God foreknew, and His knowledge embraced not merely the plan as a whole but every particular. For the whole embraces the parts of which it is composed and cannot exist without them. Indeed it is a principle in pure, as well as concrete numbers, that the sum and its parts are mutually inclusive and indispensable. Hence a ra-



tional view of God must make Him autocratic, the prime and only mover in the creation. He has formed and arranged according to a preconceived plan in one part as much as in another. Such sovereignty has usually been thought to exclude the freedom of the creature. On this assumption there could be no independent action; but every event of whatever kind must depend ultimately upon the Divine will and foreordination. The action of every creature, material or spiritual, seems by this scheme to be fixed by necessity and the theory to land its advocates in fatalism. But it is an obvious fact, and shows a gracious design in the moral world, that in case of those who wish to do right, their intentions are more reliable than their reasoning powers, and keep them from the errors of their theories; \* while on the contrary those whose purpose is to do wrong may have an excellent reason for their belief, but their practice is invariably vicious.

In support of the doctrine of freedom we know that man has the power to discern the truth in himself. For he has self-knowledge, consciousness, which must be to him the highest of all knowledge, the court of final appeal and paramount jurisdiction. This he must have, in matters pertaining to his own character at least, to make him a separate individual, able to think and act for himself. But more than this. His actions are not merely for the moment. They make their impress upon his character; or more properly they constitute the character itself. He lives not for, or in, the momentary act; but does everything *sub specie æternitatis*. Hence his actions are not merely the connected links of a chain, or parts of the nexus of causality; but they have an inherent quality in themselves. They are the elements which constitute the man. They are good or bad, even as he is good or bad. They deserve praise or censure, reward or punishment, because of their inherent qualities as virtuous or vicious. And this they could not have unless they were the actions of the man himself: spontaneous untrammelled; the result of choice which could be interfered with by

\* Sir John Bowring, the most advanced of Unitarians, composed the most intensely evangelical hymn of the ages: "In the Cross of Christ I Glory."

no one but their author. That this is a fact the conscience proclaims with a voice louder than the thunders of the heavens, with a movement deeper and more pervading than the earthquake's tremor. This is an utterance that no sophistry can gain-say, no threat can dismay, and no fear overwhelm. After all the influences which most affect our nature have done their utmost, the still small voice of conscience whispers the truth that "our wills are ours to make them God's." \* We are treated as responsible by the law, by the usages of society; and our consciences bear unfailing witness to this cardinal truth.

Here then we have two conceptions which are in appearance diametrically different. There is a contradiction in the moral world as clear, direct, as unimpeachable as any of Kant's celebrated antinomies. In truth this is the fundamental antinomy of our nature, containing in its two counterparts the elements of all thought; supporting all the rest and giving them their significance. How shall the mind act when it finds itself between these two apparent contradictions when viewed with respect to each other, but irresistible truths when found in solution? Shall we say that they are opposite poles of that magnet which holds the forces of human nature; contradictory elements held together by the bar which measures the breadth of our understanding; both embraced under a higher unity which may be revealed in another stage of existence, but is beyond our comprehension in this life? This subterfuge is not confined to this particular antinomy of the reason. Life is full of instances where there seems to be a direct contradiction in terms, but where both extremes are inevitable. Such, for example, are the infinitely great and small in time or space; the infinite divisibility of matter; or the  $n$ th number of parts not being equal to the infinite whole. In each case the opposite theses are true, and yet one excludes the other. Still all these are matters of speculation which do not involve our physical or moral welfare. But the antinomy of necessity and freedom touches our lives every moment, and underlies our moral character to such a degree that we

\*Tennyson in Mem. Initio.

can be neither good nor bad—that is we cannot be moral beings at all—without acting on the principle that both are true. For if we do not acknowledge the sovereignty of God we are under no law—since all human laws get their sanction from an authority which has a right to command, and to punish if the command be disobeyed. On the other hand if we have no freedom of action our conduct has no moral character. If our actions are necessary because constrained, then their moral quality, if they have any, does not pertain to us but to the forces which compelled them. The responsibility is wholly shifted from us, and placed upon the Being which ordered, compelled, was author of the act; and we have nothing to do either with the act or its consequences. On the contrary: If we are entirely independent then there is no such thing as religion to bind us; and no authority to reward or punish except our own. This dispenses with a sovereign such as is required according to the common doctrines of morality. Yet as few are consistent antinomians or determinists, the exact sense of these words, the two views, so opposite in their enunciation, are held and acted upon in harmony. But as this involves not merely a matter of speculation, but of conduct, of character, of present welfare and eternal destiny, there must be some rational way by which the mind instinctively acts, and though unconsciously works out its destiny according to the true principles underlying and supporting our nature. In a matter, however, that so closely touches, or rather is indispensable to, our welfare for time and eternity, we do not believe that God intended we should be left in the dark; that we should believe contradictory opposites which would logically subvert each other. There must be a rational explanation which will harmonize, and can be comprehended when it is plainly enunciated. To such explanation we will now address ourselves.

Every system of revealed religion, and particularly the Jewish and its supplement the Christian, rests upon the assumption of the omnipotence and omniscience of the creator of the universe. And this is not only a doctrine of positive declaration, but an assumption acted upon in all the teachings and usages of these

systems. Moreover it is a necessary postulate of reason. It has been well said by Locke that creation is a work of such transcendent power and wisdom, that the mind cannot conceive of anything beyond the reach of those attributes as they are exhibited in nature. First, to change power into matter, and this matter from the subtlest forms of ether or star dust into solid spheres. Next to give the several bodies of the solar system, as they are [started on their unending courses, the exact impulse and direction of each of the forty-three motions now known to prevail among the greater planets so that they should move on without interference and describe perfect orbits forever—causes the imagination to reel as it contemplates the indescribable intricacy. For the profoundest analysis by the aid of the calculus cannot equate the course of a body acted upon simultaneously by three forces; and the difficulty would be immeasurably increased when, not three, but forty-three, forces were exerted at the same time. And if we add the slight though real, and all the more difficult to equate because slight, of the 300 or more asteroids, the intricacy of the problem is increased absolutely beyond conception. Yet all this intricacy is involved in the motions in our own solar system. If we still further reflect that our system is only one of the stellar universe, where every fixed star—and their number seems absolutely infinite—is each the nucleus of a system, and all these are “parts of one stupendous whole,” severally acting and reacting on each other, we are at a loss which to admire most, the wisdom which devised all these orbits and the power which projected them—whether as nebulae of star dust or as solid bodies—for our purpose it makes no difference which view—into space; or the conservative energy which, with Providential care, maintains them forever in their movements. Conservation seems quite as wonderful as creation; and to involve, if that were possible, still greater foresight. The pious exclamation of Job: “I know that Thou canst do everything” is the utterance of every devout and rational creature, and is the natural expression of the mind as it comprehends that small part of the Divine Majesty which is disclosed to our feeble sight.

We may well conclude that the power of God cannot be limited except where its exercise would involve a contradiction or absurdity. The speculations of the schoolmen as to what omnipotence could, or could not, do, were generally confined to childish or absurd examples. As instances: Whether God could make a woman who had been defiled into a virgin again? Could He do something which involved an actual contradiction; or, as a general instance, whether he could reverse that which had been already done so as to make it undone? Of course, that which already has taken place could not be put out of the order of nature. For it has become a fixed fact; part of the divine acts; and could not be undone any more than the Divinity could change His essential character.

That God can change the order of nature as to the present or future is certain. For He is doing this all the time in the evolution of new phenomena in the course of natural law. These involve a change in the order to suit such conditions as have been introduced into the world by new requirements growing out of the advanced culture of rational agents. But this is a part of a plan, which, in its unwonted action, we term miraculous; but in its ordinary procedure we call natural. The devising of the plan for the government of a universe to be created in future—for the plan must antedate its execution—involves the employment of means and a regular sequence. But the formation of each of the parts of this scheme is voluntary with God; having no constraint, and no other necessity than that which is involved in His character for infinite knowledge, goodness and power. God, in order to be what He is, must have power to do everything which is in accordance with a plan that embraces the end from the beginning, the final good for all His creatures; and thereby making the outcome of His creation correspond to the perfection of His nature. There can be absolutely no limitations to the exercise of this power except such as involve an absurdity, a contradiction, a mistake, or an injustice. If He makes a creation at all, it must be by the transference of some part of His power into another being, either material or spiritual. For the

creation cannot be through the exercise of any new power which was not already possessed. For that would be changing His own nature; making it greater than before—which is not possible—because that nature being infinite it cannot be enlarged by any power drawn from some other source. Hence if He effected a creation it must be by the transference of some portion of His power or other attributes into the creature which He formed. And that creature by the fact of its formation would be new, and in that respect different from the power or other attributes which constituted it before the transference was made. Each organization would be an individual; a separation from the source whence it was derived, and something different from every other so derived. For if not different they would still be part of the primeval power, and not a creation at all. But if a creation then each separate aggregation would have its personality, its life so to speak, apart from the life of its Maker, and everything else which proceeded from the same source. Thus there would be an individual life, action, personality, in every complete organization which had been formed through the transference of a part of the divine power involved in creation.

The question may be reverently asked, and all opinions advanced, or theories maintained concerning the divine person and attributes, should be made with the deepest and most reverential awe. Can the Supreme Being create anything that shall be independent of Himself, and by His own volition endow it with the power of independent thought and action? If He is a transcendent personality and not immanent, then He can put as much or as little of Himself into the creature as He chooses. Of course, on a pantheistic basis each portion of the universe being a part of the undivided divine nature—as is plain in the system of Spinoza—there would be no possibility of any one being different from Him, much less independent. All would be equally God; and whatever He did or willed would be reflected in His creatures. These, in their turn, would be both in character and action a transcript of the divine nature. Hence there could be no room for freedom in the creature; but everything would live,



move, and have its being in God. Hence it could do no other way than as His nature and will determined. On this supposition, if God be transcendently good, as all systems of theism represent Him, there would be no evil. For God Himself could do nothing wrong; and the creature being a transcript of His nature would have neither the ability nor the inclination to do evil. The presence of evil in the universe demonstrates the falsity of pantheism, and the truth of freedom by the same argument. For on its pantheistic assumption that all are parts of God, if He be good as a Supreme Being, then all that goes to make up His personality would of necessity be good. But we know that this is not the fact. For sin, and suffering as its consequence, do exist. This is an irrefragable demonstration against pantheism on any supposition that the universe is constituted on optimistic principles. So if God be good, and the universe working out good and only good results, then pantheism is metaphysically impossible. Again: The presence of evil shows that there are rational creatures who have the power to do wrong; that they act in opposition to the divine will; and therefore this action is independent. This admitted fact demonstrates the truth of freedom as certainly as the falsity of the view that the whole universe is only a necessary phenomenon of God, and a part of Himself.

Thus our contention would seem to be established from the fact that there is evil in the world; and this is the result of action by creatures who are sufficiently independent to do contrary to the will of the Supreme Ruler. But the truth involved can be proved in another way. And to make the point after which we are aiming perfectly clear, we again ask the question: "Can Omnipotence create an object distinct from Himself, and endow that object with independent action?" To this there is a ready answer in the case of anything which has a complete structure, and a separate individuality, from the lowest organism up to that which possesses a distinct personality. For even the lowest grade of atomic combination, where matter takes upon itself a distinct form so as to become a separate unity, discloses itself as a creature distinct



from the Creator. The analogy to human action makes this clear. The machine which man makes, whether simple or complicated, while it may exhibit his skill and power, is entirely distinct from his personality. So the creature formed by the Creator, while the embodiment of His thought and the witness to His power, is in no respect more identified with His personality than is the creation of man's workmanship. It obeys the law of its formation; has its separate place in the economy of nature; and thus far appears to act independently of everything else, even that which exhibits the principles of its construction and the mode of its action. Each separate organization is so far unique that it consists of different material and has its own temporal or spatial position. Though it may be said that it merely acts as it is acted upon, has no purpose of itself, no intelligence, and no will to direct that intelligence, yet it, as a subject distinct, receives power, and as an actor transmits it to another. And as we rise through the crystal which is constant to its own laws, up to the zoöphytes, or "false forms of nature" so-called, we see an increasing tendency to individualization and independent voluntary action. The lowest forms of living organisms as *amoebæ*, show a faint trace of voluntary action by opening some part of their system—be this a distinct mouth, or the whole surface in the form of an apparatus to receive food, and to cast out the refuse after the nutritive portions had been absorbed. Advancing through the higher orders of plant life we see that while the root and stalk are immovable, the branches and foliage are capable of movement towards the objects of their desire, both in stretching toward light and heat, and in closing the petals of the flower upon their prey, even when fixed at the roots. Advancing still higher, the integrating and individualizing power rapidly increases through the animal kingdom, until finally each creature appears to have complete and unrestrained control over its own movements, and is interfered with in the gratification of its own wishes chiefly by others possessing like powers. But as yet there seems to be no more than independent physical action. There is no moral character, neither virtue nor vice in the actions of the lower animals. Or if this

does begin to show itself, it is only in a feeble degree, and its nature not well defined. Between the lower animals and man there is this distinctive differentia: a moral sense, a power of introspection, a feeling of self-approval or guilt. Perhaps of all the endowments which have been selected as decisive for determining whether a creature is merely a brute, accountable neither to itself nor to a sovereign master who loves virtue and hates vice, this is the most conclusive—the sense of responsibility, and, as a consequence, that of guilt or approval by the personality of the actor.

That such is the distinguishing characteristic of our nature cannot be denied. It is the most pronounced feeling among mankind. It differentiates each individual from every other, and makes himself alone the author of his action. Its voice cannot be stilled or evaded. This, the "Categorical Imperative" commands without condition as to the action to be done, and without reference to any other authority to sanction its requirement. It condemns without appeal, punishes without reprieve, and demands obedience at our peril. Moreover the command addressed to a rational creature implies the intelligence to understand, the power to obey, and the discipline to mould character which results from obedience. These facts all have the evidence of intuition, superior to all argument, attested by every rational creature; and perpetually accompanied with the satisfaction of a personal triumph when duty has been met, and of defeat when there has been a failure. There can be no question therefore that man is treated as though he possessed moral freedom, both by his own conscience and the social judgments of his fellowmen; the expression of law as the bond of society, and the voice of God speaking approval or censure. There is no escaping from the fact that our nature is possessed of moral freedom, the highest and most distinctive of all individual prerogatives. We have seen the approach toward complete physical freedom in the integration of the individual life, and the realization of separate organizations and consequent independent actions, from the crystal and the zoöphyte up to the highest expression in man. The question now fairly meets us: How can these things be? How can a

creature which by formation and constant support is wholly dependent upon the power which called it into being, have a distinct personality and independent volition? Since there is no doubt as to the facts, some solution for them must be found. That the independence and consequent independent action increases in intensity and clearness as we rise in the grades of organized beings is beyond dispute. The question is not of liberty or necessity; for the latter is excluded from the actions of any creature having separate organization and individual life. Not only is this true of the lower orders, but man still further possesses moral as well as intellectual freedom. But how can he exercise this power under a sovereignty which is absolute? Can there be an *Imperium in Imperio*? Can man set up a government—rather a rebellion—against his Maker?

We must recur to our conception of the limits, if any, which are to be placed to the exercise of power by the Almighty Creator. Is He limited to the exercise of this sovereignty which flows from creation and therefore from absolute possession? Certainly there is no limit on the side of increase of power, for omnipotence includes all which can be conceived. God would not be almighty if He could do something which would add to His power. He may go on creating new worlds, but this would be by virtue of the exercise of power already possessed. He certainly is not limited to the creatures already formed, or to the laws by which they are governed. A new creation, on the enactment of a new law might seem miraculous to us; but would indicate no increase of divine power.

But can God limit himself? Certainly not in His essential nature. But in the plan of creation, while all possible worlds and systems for their government were open for His selection, He limited Himself to the one He saw proper to create. Is there then anything which He cannot do? Yes: He cannot commit sin; for that would destroy His own nature, which He could not do and still remain God, with all His attributes in absolute perfection. But He can do anything which does not, *per se*, involve a contradiction or absurdity. We have seen that there are sepa-

rate beings, rising in the grade of individuality all the way up to man, who possess all that the inferior orders include, with the superadded moral accountability. The existence of such is a fact as patent as any in nature, showing what is possible by what is actual; which is the most drastic test of possibility. It is assumed throughout as undeniable that God could make any creature which the capacities of matter permitted, and when He transferred His power into the forms of matter in producing the phenomenal creation, He could infuse as much power, as many capacities, as many attributes as He saw proper. The idea of creation as the transference of energy, which is the only rational conception of this act, would not only allow but require the infusion of such qualities as those fundamental to matter in an organized system, such as space-occupancy or extension, gravity, power of definite proportion among elements. In like manner when the work was the formation of creatures endowed with intellectual and moral natures, there must be a transference of these qualities, from the overflowing fulness of the divine character, which are necessary to constitute them moral and accountable beings. We see every degree of difference in the allotment from "Plato's brain" to the feeblest intellect that is rational—*compos mentis*—or even to those who have no mind at all, and are not accountable before any tribunal. So, in the allotments of wealth, opportunity for culture, the innumerable distinctions by which men differ in the natural or social endowments. God does make a difference in the allotments, the fact again, as we have seen before, being the most forcible proof for the theory.

Again, if man is made in the image of God, then he must have according to his capacity such intellectual and moral qualities as would make him like the exemplar after which he was formed. This likeness to the Creator could not consist in material or bodily form. For we are forbidden to imagine the Godhead to be a form composed of wood, stone, or any matter by which the divine nature could be apprehensible by the bodily senses. The likeness then must consist exclusively in moral and intellectual

resemblance, by which truth in the one and virtue in the other could be discerned and practised. So in the formation of a creature to be the denizen of a material world, and to display his energies through a material organ, the likeness to his Maker must consist exclusively in those qualities which exist in the divine mind, and are transformed from the fulness thereof into the organ for action in a material creation.

The chief difference between the conception of God revealed in the Scriptures and that of the heathen world is that of rational government and blind destiny. The latter view holds that the power of fate, destiny, necessity rules not merely in the realm of human affairs, but controls by an irresistible force the actions of the gods themselves. Thus the entire universe is held down by an adamantine fetter, compelling it to act in a certain way from which there is no escape. This necessity, fate, destiny is blind, having no regard to the character or capacities of intelligent agents or the laws of matter, but rises superior to them all. This excludes freedom from God and man, from the heavens and the earth. There is no contending against its power; there is no swaying it by entreaty; there is no plea of justice which will avail. Such a system of course excludes virtue and vice, because it overrides responsibility, intelligence—every quality of a rational being. Or, if it admits that men act from such principles, there is no security for them against the blind action of this dread power which can render their best efforts futile. For it alike tramples down and mocks the greatest virtue; and fails to punish the worst vice. According to such a conception God could not make a free agent, because He himself is not free, and He cannot impart to others what He does not possess. He is as much under bonds as the veriest slave; and hence can offer no help to free others from the same servitude. Such a system is abhorrent to reason; and would, if true, change light into darkness, and life into worse than annihilation. For it would involve an ever-living misery; disclosing not only man's own impotency to help himself, but excluding any power to alleviate the misery which appeals for help on every side.

But the conception of a Creator, such as is disclosed in the conscience of man and corroborated by the Revelation which is supplementary thereto, makes Him all-powerful, all-wise, all-good. He was free in the past eternity to create or not. According to His infinite wisdom, He saw proper by a free determination, when as yet there were no visible heavens or earth; when all things were summed up in His own Person, to make man and make him in His own image. When there is a transference of power into its equivalent matter, the creation emerges. Where nothing was before now there is phenomenal world, the theatre for the display of creatures having the double nature of material bodies and spiritual powers. To create or not was a free act; since before creation began there was one state of existence, and after it began another, which involves choice. So when the work began, out of the infinite possibilities in the control of the infinite power, one system was selected; which, as Leibnitz so well expresses the idea, was the best of all possible worlds. The best because it was the choice of an omniscient and all-gracious being who made the world not so much for his own glory—which was not necessary as he already possessed this in an infinite degree—as for the diffusion of this goodness in the formation of innumerable creatures to share with him in his activities and his happiness. This was a free act to which God was impelled by no necessity. Necessity was no part of the divine nature, and therefore would not be transferred to the creatures formed in His own image.

Now we are prepared to say that the Supreme Being could form a creation like himself in his attributes. And if creation be transference of power, then God could make a being in his own image, like himself in kind, differing in degree as necessarily must be the case. For the thing made must be inferior to the maker. Unless it was, then all the attributes which constitute the maker would be transferred to the thing formed; which process would exhaust the former and reduce it to a nonentity. This creature man, made in the image of God, must be free, even as the Creator was free either to make this, or some



other ; or not to make anything at all. If then it be the free choice of the Supreme Being to make a man endowed with that freedom of action which is necessary for him to be like God, surely He could do this. And as He was free and impelled by no necessity, the creature to be like Him must also be free. Moreover this is necessary for the creature himself to enable him to build up character by his own action, and thus through increase in righteousness and true holiness to constantly become more like his Creator. But to form a creature with capacities to become more like Himself in no wise abridges the sovereignty of God. Man is still this creature, yet having a separate existence, made so by the choice of his Creator, an independent personality, standing at the head of the list of separate beings, each in its own sphere acting its part in the general scheme of the universe. God certainly made man a separate being from Himself unless we accept the grossest pantheism, and make Him the author of sin. Hence, if He made man a separate being He could endow him with qualities suited to his position as an element or factor in the evolution of His grand designs. It certainly is no abridgement of the divine power to create a universe. Nay, rather it is the display of that power in transferring of His own sufficiency to an innumerable multitude of creatures. For these in their own proper persons are able to enjoy the riches of that goodness which, by diffusion, now fills space. And thus is continued for all time the life of untold millions who have the separate personality and intelligence necessary to make them co-operative with Him in the display. They would be no less the divine possession by the diffusion of His nature ; and the ability derived to become more like their exemplar continually would make them, if possible, still more His possession. For as it would be no abridgment of this power to make material and intelligent agents for its diffusion and display, neither would it be to endow them with capacity for independent action in moral character. Nay, it would be an abridgment of omnipotence if this could not be done. For while there are creatures innumerable from the lowest organization up to the most complicated,



having each its separate place, function, and use as merely material, and acting as physical forces; it certainly can be no abridgment of the power of creation if there be another order of creatures who shall resemble their creator in their higher qualities, that is in those of His moral nature; with a capacity for further development by their own free action bestowed for that purpose.

So we hold that God can, without limiting His own power or prerogative make an intelligent creature and endow this with the power of independent action, not merely as a physical agent, but also as one who is like his Maker in kind though not in degree—in righteousness and true holiness. The divine sovereignty is not limited by the formation of a creature who shall, by this appointment, have absolutely independent power in the sphere of his activity. Had such creation been formed by constraint, or had the creature through freedom trenched upon the divine prerogative, the case would be different. We see "man, the minister and interpreter of nature," bringing all her powers to his behoof by obedience to her laws. Even so we see the same agent availing himself of the powers of truth, holiness, justice, so as to work out for himself a character which by alliance with the forces of good in the world, shall come into such relation to these forces that they shall all be coöperative with him. The material world is not lessened in its power and resources, but rather increased by their employment through the energy and skill of human science. The whole becomes a richer possession, more productive of good in proportion as man, while acting freely in his own personality, allies himself more closely with the physical forces by understanding and obeying the laws which control them. So man in his relation to the moral laws which govern the kingdom of God cannot avail himself of their efficiency save by understanding truth, justice, and law, and shaping his conduct accordingly. But by such alliance he fashions himself so as to become a factor in the world for the prevalence of good and the mastery of evil. This process must begin in his own nature. It is the leaven placed in his heart which is to work out by the

perfect freedom of his action. Nothing can compel him to be good. For if he were under compulsion his action in relation to himself would be neutral. It might be bad or good, *per se*, but if forced would have no relation to his character; would not, so so far as he is concerned, have any moral significance.

Hence it follows, inevitably, that if there is to be such a quality as virtue in man, such a possession as moral character, or if man is to be happy or miserable as the result of his own action, the action must be unconstrained in order to be his. And if he be rewarded or punished this must be done for what he has wrought of his own free will, not under the behest of a superior power. And accordingly it follows that sovereignty in the Creator, if He create anything which is accountable, is inseparably connected with the bestowal of freedom in order to insure moral action and accountability. For as the agent in a physical universe could not have a separate existence unless it were endowed with the qualities to enable it to discharge its functions, even so there could be no moral agent unless he have the power to do that which has a moral quality. And this action in turn could have no quality *per se* unless it be the result of his choice; and could not be even his action if it was elicited from him by constraint.

But we have analogies without number to prove this truth. Indeed we cannot know the mind of God save as he reveals Himself in terms of human comprehension. He is constantly called our Father; and His relations to us in every regard are illustrated by the relations between an earthly father and his children. Here again we must understand this of kind, and not of degree. The Infinite condescends to the finite, as must ever be the case, if there is to be any communication between them. God thus enables us to understand His feeling toward us by our exercise of kindred feeling in the relations of our nature. "Like as a father pitieth his children so the Lord pitieth those who fear Him." "*But vaster!*" The closest, the most tender of all feelings of our hearts, the love of the mother for the helpless creature cast upon her bosom, is employed, but only as an insufficient simile of the Heavenly Parent's love. For the mother may forget her sucking

child; but the Fatherhood of God is still closer, since it never forgets.\* Deep, tender, abiding and self-sacrificing as the earthly love of parents for their children, the love of God toward man is, like all His attributes, as much higher as the heavens are higher than the earth. We are justified by Divine usage in the employment of a simile. The father begets a child. God creates a man. The father nurtures and educates his son, striving all the time to develop him into an agent for independent action. God fashions man out of the dust of the earth as to his body; breathes into his nostrils the breath of life, and man becomes a living soul as to his immateriality. He walks the earth as an independent being, a free agent, endowed with the power to understand the good, to choose and practice this for the building up of character. When the son arrives at maturity the father encourages separate action. He divides his possessions to his loved ones with joy as soon as they show themselves able to take an independent share in the duties and responsibilities of life. He apportions a definite part to each and says to him: "Go, son, and occupy as your own this farm, this business, taking with you all the endowment which you received at birth, all the culture which you have gained through my fostering care. This estate, this enterprise is henceforth your own; and my family possession, my joy will be increased in exact measure as you show yourself worthy of the new ownership and responsibility." Has the parent abridged himself by this act? Nay, verily, if the son acts worthily of the gifts and responsibilities with which he has been entrusted. The earthly father is glorified if his son prospers and shows himself alert and efficient in the new and self-reliant position. So is the case in the relation of man to his Maker. "Herein is my Father glorified, if ye bring forth much fruit." The analogy is so complete in all its parts that it actually trenches on identity. The comparison might be carried out to any length of application. "So is the kingdom of heaven like a householder, who, before taking his journey into a far country, called together his servants and distributed various talents," coupled with the injunction, "occupy

\* Isaiah 49: 15.

till I come." That is, take whatever I have given to you; and, by your independent action, while I am absent, make the best possible use of your talents. Here again the analogy is complete. The master goes away into a far country. He throws the responsibility entirely upon his several servants. The master is out of reach, so to speak. He is absent a long time, which is an element of greater responsibility to the individual free agent. If the master were in sight, or close at hand, or absent only a short time, the independent action of each individual might be interfered with. But here there is every element of responsibility resting upon the actor. The master does not abridge his ownership by his voluntary surrender of the custody for a time. But he transfers this with the distinct purpose that the recipient shall use it independently during the time of his responsibility. Even so God does not surrender His sovereignty by entrusting freedom of action to man. This sovereignty in the case of the earthly father toward the son by a voluntary and temporary surrender neither abridges the power of the one nor interferes with the free action of the other. Each is as free as though there were only one or the other in the universe. The son, when he is given full ownership in a portion of his father's goods, the servant, when he has received the talents to trade with—either is quite as independent as though he were absolutely alone in the world. So when God creates man and endows him with freedom in the use of his talents, the latter is—with reverence be it spoken—as free to act as though he were the only being in existence. The analogy is here again so complete that it is separated from identity, not in the relations which constitute it, but in the individuals of which it is the subject. The earthly father begets a child, nurtures and develops independent powers of action in him, and then entrusts a part of his estate to his care to hold and manage as his own. Cannot God do as much? Can He not, with His unlimited wisdom, power and resources, and actuated by His transcendent love, create a rational and moral being, endow him with separate powers of action and then entrust to his keeping a part of His own nature as a possession for eternal occupancy? The question

answers itself. The conclusion is inevitable, and comes with all the force of a demonstration in pure science that the Sovereignty of God is perfectly consistent with the Freedom of man.

Thus the question which has been the stumbling block in theology, and the agony of the earnest believer, is capable of a solution. This is founded upon the nature of God as He reveals Himself to us, and of the nature of man disclosed by the conscience corroborated by revelation. It is alike certified by the requirements of morality and duty toward the Superior Being, and the duties of men in their relations with each other.

This question has not only been considered by the Church as one impossible of solution because it seems to involve a direct contradiction, but also is admitted by philosophy to be liable to the same objection, for Kant reckons it as one of the antinomies of pure reason. But it is now shown to be capable of logical explanation. The sovereignty of God is involved in creation, whether that be *ex nihilo* or a transference of energy. It is equally necessary to the idea of a constant providence. For this in order to be effective must extend to every particle of matter in the material universe, and every organized being or separate personality in the immaterial or spiritual world. But absolute power and freedom in the Supreme Being involves the idea that He can do anything which does not lead to an absurdity or contradiction. Hence He can make a creature endowed with freedom without in any wise trenching upon his own, and can assign that creature a separate sphere of responsibility for the performance of a specific duty. And we see that he is called to account for his actions perpetually, just as each particle of matter and separate organism is for the discharge of its function. This is *à priori* possible, and requires no *contradictio in adjecto*, or in the consequences. Inseparable from the nature of every rational creature there is found the consciousness of this freedom testified by the first, the highest and the *sine qua non* of all other proof. For man feels this to be true, otherwise he is not a separate individual, and can be the author of no action of any sort. Hence he can be neither rational or irrational, any more than he can be

virtuous or vicious—because it is not he that reasons ; and hence he can be neither true nor false. But this freedom is assumed in all the relations of social life ; is the expression of human justice ; involved in the sanctions of civil law ; and in the final adjudication of our life before the bar of God as a separate individual who must answer for himself.

Reason and morality are equally imperative in their demand. In every conceivable position man is treated as possessed of freedom, and therefore compelled to be responsible for both thought and action. Therefore, if the commands of God have any reason for their enunciation in conscience or revelation, if human life has any meaning, and effects any result, this must all be on the basis of freedom and responsibility. For these are the endowments bestowed upon man in his creation ; and must necessarily be consistent with the sovereignty of God who voluntarily created him with such a nature to work out his own destiny.

## II.

### INSPIRATION.

BY REV. A. E. TRUXAL, D.D.

Inspiration means an inbreathing, and it is at once implied that two persons are concerned in the transaction; one from whom the inbreathing proceeds and the other by whom it is received. And it follows then too that the process of inspiration can take place between persons only, and not between things; nor yet between a person and a thing. Two self-conscious and acting personalities must necessarily be involved in the transaction. Strictly speaking, therefore, words, language and acts cannot be inspired; they may however be the result of inspiration. Persons may be inspired.

Again, in order that inspiration may be effected there must exist a kinship between the persons involved in the process. This statement may be unnecessary as it is a question whether all personalities are not essentially alike; whether we can conceive of any two personalities that are not inherently related to each other. At any rate in order that one person may be inspired by another some kinship must exist between them.

Such a relation does obtain between God and man. God created man in His own image and after His own likeness. God created man that he might become His son. And certainly all those who were inspired by God to reveal His truth to the world can in reality be called the sons of God. As such an intimate and living relationship exists between God and man it is natural and reasonable to expect that some men under certain conditions would be inspired of God. Divine inspiration must therefore be presupposed.

Again, divine inspiration does not destroy the active personality of the person inspired. The powers of the inspired person



continue in living activity during the process so that what he speaks or does under inspiration are none the less his own words and deeds. In fact we must believe that the faculties of his soul involved are raised to a higher and more intense activity than in any other condition. If the personality of an inspired person were subdued or held in abeyance in the transaction, it would no longer be inspiration, but something else. The person would then become a passive instrument only, a vessel, by and through which the inspirer spoke His words and performed His acts. If the Holy Scriptures were produced in this way they would then be the pure words and works of God. But in that view of the case we would be forced to one of two conclusions. Either the inspired portion of the Scriptures would be reduced to a minimum or to nil; or the Lord God would be set before us in such a character that we could neither believe, hope or trust in Him, nor love or worship Him. Consequently in order to escape both horns of this dilemma we are forced to hold that the inspired person is himself as really and thoroughly engaged in the operation as the one who inspires; and that the result of the inspiration is as much his own product as it is that of the inspirer.

But then we come to the conclusion also that inspiration does not make men infallible revealers and teachers of divine truth. Men though inspired are still imperfect. Though under inspiration their words and acts are still limited by their own powers of apprehension and comprehension. These powers are all the time dependent upon personal endowment, past experience, present environment, and the degree of human development in general at the time. To be the infallible revealers and teachers of the truth of God would require the men of inspiration to have acquired a stage of perfection unknown to human kind. I can endorse the words of Julian Hawthorne when he says, "It must be obvious that the infinite Creator in addressing His finite creatures would necessarily accommodate the form of his communications to the limitations of their ideas and language."\* But we are also compelled to go farther than that and say that it is utterly impossible

\* *Literature of all Nations*, Vol. 1, p. 115.

for men to mediate infallibly divine truth to the world. Though the powers of their minds and hearts be raised to the highest pitch of sensibility and understanding possible they are still liable to fail in clearly apprehending the divine communication and in comprehending the full meaning and application of it. The conceptions of inspired men would of necessity be more or less defective in many respects and the truth revealed would be mixed up with mistakes and errors. It cannot be otherwise. The expectation, therefore, that the sacred Scriptures are perfect and absolutely free of all errors in every respect in their presentation of the truth of God is an idle dream in which many believers in God have lived and are now living.

What then does inspiration accomplish? Much every way. Holy men of old by their piety and faith and their spiritual fellowship with God put themselves in such a condition that God could and did reveal unto their souls divine truth and quicken apprehensions of it within them; and they by their communications gave to the world moral and religious truths that could otherwise not have been acquired. By inspiration men were enabled to see and proclaim the will, purpose and truth of God; and by the revelations thus made by God through inspired men believers have attained unto a knowledge and wisdom that have redounded to the elevation, advancement and general welfare of mankind. As a result of inspiration granted unto men the world was at different times saved from moral ruin. There have been epochs in the history of mankind when as it seems to us at least deliverance from impending destruction had to come from above through the instrumentality of men inspired by the Spirit of the Lord. Abraham by inspiration of God separated his people from their destructive surroundings and taught them the faith and worship of the true God. Moses by divine inspiration delivered the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage and gave unto them the law of God. The great prophets by inspiration of the Lord God reclaimed the people at different times from their apostasies and general worldliness and thus saved to the world the faith in the one true and only living God. Jesus Christ by the

unique constitution of His person and the consequent indwelling of God the Father in Him revealed to the fullest extent the truth, will, purpose and character of God, and proclaimed the same for the salvation of the world. In Him inspiration rose to its highest and most complete form. The apostles were inspired to preach and teach the gospel that had been brought to light by the Lord, and to guide the infant church in the right way of faith and religious practice. By divine inspiration the knowledge, wisdom and truth of God have been given to the children of men, without which, so far as our finite minds can see, the human family at different times of its history would have been involved in moral ruin. Evidence has on all sides and all along been accumulating showing with overwhelming force that the human mind unaided cannot acquire a correct and full knowledge of the truth and that without the light and wisdom of God mankind is unable to rise to the higher planes of righteousness and truth. We are ready to confess that we owe everything to God for the goodness and truth in the world; we owe everything to divine inspiration.

And yet it does not by any means follow that any inspired men (not including Jesus of Nazareth, who was no ordinary man) were perfect in every respect and consequently infallible in every particular in their teaching. The TRUTH is infallible. And in so far as any inspired person is enabled to mediate the revelation of divine truth to the children of men does his teaching become infallible. But as the truth of God must of necessity pass through the person's own mind and heart and life it does not reach the world in its pure and perfect state. We often speak of the *pure* word of God; but the expression is only comparatively correct. In the absolute sense the pure word of God cannot reach us. What we possess is the word of God as apprehended and interpreted, and proclaimed by holy men enlightened by the spirit of truth which is the Holy Ghost.

God can reveal His word fully and absolutely only to a person who is in all respects equal to Himself—who is also God. Consequently the fullest revelation of divine truth we have received in

and through the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the incarnate Son of God. And among men those become the truest and best prophets of the Lord, who reach the highest degree of godliness—who become most like unto God in righteousness and true holiness. With such God can hold communion and fellowship through the Spirit; and the Holy Spirit can quicken in them such an apprehension of the truth that they can with positive assurance say “Thus Saith the Lord.”

Abraham, Moses and the prophets, the apostles and evangelists, were all inspired men of God and revealed the truth to the children of men—not to all of them but to such who possessed a sufficient degree of faith and obedience to be able to receive it at their hands. But not one of them described the process of his inspiration; for the very good reason no doubt that he could not have done so. They had visions and dreams, and they heard voices, and they came to a knowledge of the truth through the experience of their souls in communion with God, and they declared what they had in these various ways learned to be the word of the Lord. But how they knew that it was God speaking to them and through them they did not make known. The truth they received authenticated itself to their minds and hearts, and the truth as they proclaimed it authenticates itself also before our minds and consciences and consequently we accept it as the word of God.

Assuming the general principles thus far advocated to be true, as I believe them to be, I cannot accept the doctrine of the plenary or verbal inspiration of the sacred Scriptures. If the general position taken in this paper be correct we could not expect all the words and language of the Scriptures, all the thoughts of the writers, all their inferences, and every form of the application of the truth as advocated by them to be the direct product of inspiration and hence faultless and perfect. But what we expect to find in the Scriptures are the words of the prophets and the thoughts of the prophets as well as the words and thoughts of God, and these so organically united with each other that they are inseparable, being related to each other very much as soul

and body in the person, or as idea and form in the painting of an artist. The Scriptures have a human side to them as well as a divine, and that imperfections and defects and errors should appear on the human side is just what we should under the circumstances expect.

And when we now take up our Bible and examine into its constitution we find that it conforms to the theory here set forth. To analyze all the books of the Bible would require a volume. A few examples will serve my present purpose. When we open the Bible the first thing that confronts us is an account of the creation. Plenary inspiration would require us to accept all the statements there made as being literally true. But the wider knowledge of the world acquired in these latter days compels us to believe that God did not create the heavens and the earth and all creatures in *six days*. Commentators in order to justify the record tell us that the six days are to be understood as so many *periods* of time of indefinite length. But there stand the definite words, morning, evening, day; and nothing whatever appears in the record that indicates that the idea of periods of time was in the mind of the sacred writer at all. It is quite certain that the account is not to be understood literally. What then shall we call it? Some one says "Idealized History." Others suggest that it belonged to a body of traditions that came down from the earliest ages and that the writer of the Pentateuch embodied it in his book of the creation. But if the sacred writer has put on record words which cannot be accepted as literally true, what then becomes of inspiration and of what value is the record? Inspiration remains and the account still teaches divine truth. The truths taught by inspiration are: (1) That there is but one God who created the world and all creatures, not many gods and many creators; (2) That God made man after His own likeness, so that a communion and fellowship might obtain between him and his God; (3) That man needs a day of rest for the contemplation of spiritual and eternal interests. These are divine truths that came to man by inspiration from above and they have been of immense value to mankind.

It is in place to note also in this connection the account of the creation of woman. No intelligent Bible student would in these days accept as literally true the statements that God saw that it was not good for man to be alone, caused a deep sleep to fall upon him, took a rib out of his side, created a woman of it, and presented her unto him as his helpmeet. I care not what you call this description of woman's creation; I care not how you explain it, but certainly you cannot construe it literally. Must it then be cast aside as of no value? By no means. The truth is taught that God created man, male and female, and that they are to be complementary one of another; that this was to be an order of being not only for propagation, but also for the accomplishment of moral ends. In self-conscious beings there is a moral use in sex. The male and female in man are to redound to each other's good mentally, morally and spiritually.

The Bible is a book of religion and morals. It teaches theology and ethics. But in many instances a great deal of the outward form must be removed before the religious and moral ideas and principles can be discovered. Take for example such books as those of Jonah, Esther, Ruth and some others, too, and a great deal of the form and setting must be set aside before the truth of universal application can be found. The same holds good of many parts and portions of the Scriptures here and there.

Another remark I wish to make in this connection is that when we study the Old Testament Scriptures closely we find progress in the religious and moral conceptions of God's people from age to age. There are epochs and stages more or less marked. We note that the idea of God and that of right are enlarged and improved and enhanced to higher planes as time, with its many and various changes, rolls on. But what is this but a verification in the sphere of the Scriptures of the doctrine of development as taught by the sainted Dr. Nevin to the boys in college in his day and of the doctrine of evolution as taught by scientists in the present day. I do not mean that the theory of development taught by Dr. Nevin and others and that of evo-

lution as now taught are exactly one and the same thing. For as I understand them they are not. Yet the Christian philosopher has no difficulty in reconciling and harmonizing the two conceptions. And the facts as they appear in the history of the religion and morals of the ancient people from Adam to Christ show that inspiration and revelation are subject to the same general laws and principles by which everything else is governed and controlled. The law of the world is that of evolution and development.

But it may be said that this is not the kind of a Bible we want. "We want a Bible that is literally and absolutely true in all its parts; a Bible whose every thought, every sentence, every word is the immediate product of the divine spirit and consequently the direct and pure word of God to man." But there is no such Bible and hence you want what you cannot have. And the Bible we do have is no doubt better for us than such a book would be that some seem to desire. At any rate we must take the Bible as it really is and thank God for it. It is the most valuable book to our souls in all the world, and if we reject it there is nothing left for us. And if we imagine it to be what it in reality is not we but deceive ourselves and fail to receive the benefit from it that it is intended to afford us.

We do not find the case materially different under the new dispensation. Here we are confronted with the revelation of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Ghost was poured out on the day of Pentecost and given to all believers. He came not upon the apostles only but upon the whole body of the Christian Church. The teaching of the New Testament is that every one that believeth and is baptized is made the recipient of the Holy Spirit. "Know ye not that your bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost." The measure of the Holy Spirit given to any one is determined by his capacity to receive and appropriate the same.

By the Spirit given them the apostles and evangelists were inspired to understand, teach and proclaim the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. But the nature and mode of the process by which the Holy Spirit inspired those men we are not able to



understand or describe. We may be able to say what inspiration is not, but be at a loss to say positively what it is. And it may be a long time before a theory of inspiration will be evolved that will prove itself generally satisfactory. When St. Peter made the confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," "Jesus answered and said blessed art thou Simon Bar-jonah; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." The Master does not say anything about the process by which the Father made this revelation to St. Peter; and from the record it does not appear that Peter himself had experienced any consciousness at all that his faith was begotten in his heart by any agency from above and beyond himself. He had been with Christ, heard His words and seen His works, and had no doubt wrestled in his own mind with the question as to who and what Christ really was, then moved by the divine spirit given him he rose to the conception which encouraged and cheered his heart, and he exclaimed, like one who by a flash had made a great discovery, **THOU ART THE CHRIST.** Jesus called this a revelation from the Father. St. Peter made that confession by inspiration.

After the day of Pentecost the apostles and evangelists and others were inspired by the Holy Spirit within them to teach and preach and live the new truth. Of the original twelve, Saints Matthew, Peter and John wrote some for the enlightenment and spiritual edification of believers. St. Paul, however, was the most prolific writer of all the apostles. The majority of the apostles did not write anything as far as now known. But they all lived and labored, taught and worshipped, under the influence and by the power of the Holy Spirit in them. They were inspired all the time; though no doubt the divine spirit in them was more living and active, and worked more powerfully at some times than at others. They were not specially inspired to write; but their oral teaching and preaching, their worship and service in the name of the Lord, as well as their writing, all grew out of the inspiration of which they were possessed. But when we are asked what the nature of the working of God's spirit upon their

spirits and in their spirits was, we confess our ignorance of the matter. The apostles gave no account of their experiences in this respect; most likely they could not have done so. Consequently we must form our conclusions from an examination and study of their words and works. And when we do so we are compelled to set aside some views of inspiration that have been held in the past and that are held by some persons now. I have already said that inspiration does not make passive instruments of men. This is evident from the fact that circumstances and conditions, the experience and temperament of the author, show their effect on every book in the New Testament. Inspiration is not plenary in the sense in which that word is generally used. It does not overcome natural conditions. These remain as living active forces in the minds and hearts of the sacred writers. Their natural endowments, disposition and character, their experience and education, existing social and religious modes and customs, the culture of the age, all these things show their influence upon the thoughts, words and actions of inspired men. Consequently inspiration under the new dispensation does not make men infallible. It is possible for them to be mistaken, one-sided and defective in their apprehension, interpretation and application of the truth revealed to them. This is not simply a theory. It is a position substantiated by numerous facts as they appear in the Scriptures themselves. Let me give a few most patent examples.

St. Peter and St. Paul did not agree with each other in their conceptions of the requirements of the Gospel. St. Peter, living in the bosom of the Jewish community of believers, believed and taught that Gentiles must first become Jews before they can become Christians. They must be circumcised and keep the law. This was the ruling idea in St. Peter's mind. Even after he had been taught by a vision that he should not call that unclean which the Lord had cleansed, he could not fully realize that Gentile Christians stood on the same plane of fellowship with the Lord as Jewish Christians. St. Paul, on the other hand, taught a different application of the Gospel. He made faith in

Christ Jesus the sole foundation for the Christian life. Believers are no longer under the law, but have risen into the glorious liberty of the Gospel. Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but faith availeth for everything. At Antioch the two apostles came into conflict with each other on this question and St. Paul openly rebuked St. Peter for his conduct arising out of his misconception of the truth. A result of this difference between the apostles was a division of the congregation into two factions, which continued for a considerable time. If inspiration had made the apostles infallible in their teaching, if it had enabled them to see the truth in all its length, breadth and depth, this conflict would not have occurred. Their teaching would then have harmonized throughout. The only conclusion that can possibly be drawn is that inspiration did not make the apostles infallible in every particular. In each case the teaching was more or less defective. The conception of St. Paul prevailed more largely in the subsequent ages of the Church, and yet there can be no doubt but that his position was, to a certain extent, one-sided.

Again, the words of the Apostle Paul and those of other writers of scripture too, in regard to the second coming of Christ constitute another evidence that inspired men were not always infallible in their understanding and proclamation of the truth. In various connections they proclaimed the near approach of the second Advent. The Lord is at hand, be careful for nothing, was the keynote to their exhortations. How are these representations to be understood? As a matter of fact after thousands of years the Lord has not yet come. We are forced to one of two conclusions. Either the words of the sacred writers are not to be taken in their literal sense, or the writers were mistaken in the thought that the Lord would come again in the immediate future. The views of inspiration held in the past would not allow the admission of mistaken conceptions on the part of the apostles; hence commentators have been accustomed to generalize and spiritualize this teaching. They say the Lord has come and is coming from time to time in the crises of the

world's life and in the crises of nations. The death of the individual is said to be the Lord's coming to him. But whatever the Lord's relation to these events may be, they are not personal advents. Such explanations are resorted to for the purpose of maintaining the integrity of the teachings of the apostles in regard to this subject. But to my mind such an explanation is a mere subterfuge, and more is lost than gained thereby. In my view the correct solution of the difficulty is the acknowledgment that the apostles were mistaken in their expectation of the early personal appearance again of the Lord. They were in some way misled in their conceptions on this subject. What then becomes of their inspiration? It still remains; but it is evident that inspiration does not make men infallible in every respect. What is needed is that we so modify our views of inspiration that they do not conflict with the facts so patent in the book before us.

Other cases might be cited if space permitted. But these are sufficient to illustrate my position. Divine inspiration is not of such a character as to enable the person to reveal the truth absolutely and perfectly. It is not given him to make known "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." His apprehension may be imperfect, his judgment at fault, his logic defective. Consequently he is liable to make mistakes.

What then does inspiration accomplish? Much every way; the touch of the Holy Spirit puts life, earnestness and zeal into the heart of the person, sharpens his powers of apprehension, clarifies his reason, enlarges the susceptibilities of his soul, so that he will see and hear more, understand better, comprehend the truth more clearly and more fully than would otherwise be possible. Persons of inspiration will speak words, perform works, and produce writings that stand far above all ordinary productions. In evidence of this fact we have the Bible itself. The Bible as a whole is a most wonderful creation. There is nothing like it in all the world. The religious books of the heathen pale in significance before it. It stands in their midst like the sun among the stars of the firmament, in brightness and glory. The mode and

manner of its formation, its history, the variety and style of its language, its theological conceptions, its religious and moral ideas, the virtues which it sets before us, the influence it has for ages exerted and still exerts for the advancement, elevation, betterment and purification of the children of men in every relationship of life, all combine in making the Bible preëminently the Book of books. It stands separate and alone.

I cannot possibly account for it in any other way than by accepting it as the product of divine inspiration. It is the word of God to the world. It confronts the children of men with the everlasting truth of God. It will never cease to be the lamp to their feet and the light to their pathway. It has been earnestly and devoutly studied for centuries in the past, and it will be studied with increased interest in the centuries to come, and the truth embodied in its words will not be exhausted before the end of the æon has been reached. No thought can fully describe and no language adequately express the great value of this Book of books to the children of men. The Lord God speaks to us in the world of nature around, above, beneath and within us, if we have but ears to hear His voice; He speaks to us through the history of mankind as it unfolds itself from age to age; He speaks to us through the conscience and moral consciousness in the depth of our souls; but He speaks to us most fully and clearly, and in a complemental and consummating way, in and through the words of that Book given to the world under the influence and by the power of divine inspiration. Blessed are they that hear the words that are written in the Book of Life to do them. I believe in inspiration. I believe the writers of the various books of the Bible were inspired, some in a larger, some in a smaller measure. I believe the Bible to contain the word of God in its highest and fullest form possible for man to receive. I believe the Scriptures to be the word of God; for though they be both human and divine, the two elements are organically united, as soul and body, and hence cannot be separated from each other.

But will not the position advocated in this paper rob the Bible largely of its value? That is not the important question. The

vital question is, is it true? Truth is never injurious, but error always is. The change from a false to a true position may involve risks and dangers. But the danger in remaining in the false position is infinitely greater. A general may discover as the battle progresses that he has occupied an improper position; to change to a better position will expose his soldiers to great dangers; but to remain where he is is to suffer entire defeat; therefore the change must be made, the risks run, in order to win the battle. The same principle applies in the treatment of moral and religious questions. The false position must be abandoned and the true one taken. It is the only way by which the cause of truth can be subserved. Seek the truth and follow it, is the only safe motto for the Christian scholar to adopt.

In conclusion I wish to say yet for myself personally that the position I have been led to take on the subject discussed in this paper has made the Bible a far more interesting, fascinating and profitable book to me than it formerly was. The book has been brought closer to me. The truth revealed has taken firmer hold of my heart. My faith in God as revealed in and through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, has been increased and strengthened. I see more of the human in the sacred Scriptures than I formerly did, but no less of the divine. I see more of the divine in the world at large, though none the less of the human. I feel myself rooted and grounded in the faith in that one almighty and everlasting God who is above all and over all and in all.

### III.

## THE DEATH OF JESUS: A SYNOPTIC STUDY.

BY PROF. JOHN C. BOWMAN, D.D.

The Synoptic Gospels are preëminently the source of the teaching of Jesus concerning his death, for the reason that they set forth with substantial accuracy the words of Jesus as they were spoken. The fourth Gospel, while essentially trustworthy, may not be regarded as historical in the sense in which the term is applied to the Synoptic Gospels. The differences between it and the Synoptics in regard to the narrative of events in the life of Jesus, and especially in regard to the teaching of Jesus, are so wide, both as to content and style, as to warrant the separate treatment of it as a Gospel-source. In the present discussion, its testimony, however valuable, will not therefore be cited.

The direct teaching of Jesus concerning his death, as found in the Synoptics, is confined to comparatively few statements, which belong to the last six months of his ministry, mainly to the last week.

By some these statements may be regarded as the prescribed limits of a biblico-theological discussion of the teaching of Jesus concerning his death. But there is a primary question, apart from which the sayings of Jesus concerning his death are unintelligible. That is the question concerning his Messianic consciousness, out of which his teaching concerning his sufferings and death grew.

The starting-point, therefore, must be the Messiahship of Jesus, or the character of his Messianic consciousness.

Did Jesus, when entering upon his ministry, contemplate death as a necessity of his Messiahship? Or did the prospect of death arise at a later stage of his ministry as the inevitable issue of the growing unbelief and hostility of the Jewish nation?



Here, as elsewhere, the teaching of Jesus can be rightly interpreted only in the light of his person. The choice of two conceptions confronts us. The one is that Jesus early in his boyhood (Luke II. 49), or in his childhood even, as some maintain, had a full and clear consciousness of his Messiahship; that the baptismal vision was simply a divine call to begin his official work; that his sufferings and death were the foreordained means of redemption; and that with divine prevision he foresaw each succeeding step in his career, and accepted the terms of Messiahship, including sufferings and death, in conscious fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets.

This conception has the merit of logical consistency, and serves as a convenient solution of many vexed problems, provided the ordinary laws of nature, psychology, and history be entirely left out of the account.

The other conception is, that Jesus unfolded his life and character conformably to the law of normal humanity, conditioned throughout by the historical forces common to his age. According to this latter conception, Jesus, while possessing and retaining the properties of divine sonship, authenticates himself both to faith and reason as a historical person, that is, a person historically explicable. This conception is fully in harmony with the data presented in the Gospel history.

From the Synoptic record it very evidently appears that prior to his baptism Jesus neither directly nor indirectly asserted any Messianic claims. Whether or not he knew himself to be the Messiah before that event, cannot be so certainly determined. Inferentially the argument is against such knowledge. In the Synoptics there is nothing whatever to indicate that Messianic consciousness antedated the act of baptism.

Some biblical scholars, while accepting the fact of the Messiahship of Jesus, deny that Jesus made any direct Messianic claims for himself. This is notably the case with Professor Nathaniel Schmidt,\* who confesses "the wholly unexpected result" of his investigations, "that Jesus never made for himself any Messianic claims, either at the baptism or at Cæsarea Philippi."

\* *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. XIX., p. 23.

The conviction is to some extent relieved of its startling character by the added statement: "That Jesus rose above even the desire to become a righteous king, a world-conquering Messiah, can be explained only by his peculiar moral disposition and his supreme religious genius." Few christian scholars may be ready to share the conviction expressed by Professor Schmidt. At the same time it must be acknowledged that the Gospels clearly teach that so far as Jesus entertained Messianic claims, they were directly at variance with the prevalent Messianic conceptions and hopes of his age. He was not, and would not be, the Messiah of either the earlier or later prophets, much less of the Rabbis and Scribes; not even of John the Baptist. As applied to himself the name Messiah must have new content and new meaning. The political ideas of freedom and world-dominion must yield to the conception of a purely spiritual reign. The kingdom which Jesus would establish is God's kingdom, a kingdom in which men, delivered from sin, shall live as sons of God, loving God and loving one another. Jesus presents himself as the ideal of God's kingdom, in word and in deed revealing the will of the Father. According to the Synoptists the work of Jesus was primarily that of a teacher, a revealer of God. Whether he assumed the title of Messiah or not, Jesus' idea of Messiahship was to win men from a life of sin to a life of holiness and love. Primarily, therefore, by living the Messianic life of holiness and love, and thereby teaching men how to live, did Jesus seek to fulfill his mission among men. A life consecrated to God—which was the chief significance of the baptism of Jesus—apart from any sacrificial victim, is the offering most acceptable to God. Nor can it be said that the life of Jesus would have lacked full saving efficacy had his Messianic ministry been approved by the Jewish nation, and his death thereby obviated. This thought is not without value in its bearing on the general problem of human redemption. Some may be disposed to rule it out of order on the ground that as it is simply supposable it is therefore valueless. It is well to tighten the reins of speculative thought. Into that realm I have no disposition to

carry the discussion. But from the study of the Synoptics, and on the basis of their direct and implied teaching, I feel warranted in raising the questions: Was the death of Jesus necessarily involved in his Messiahship? Did Jesus contemplate his death as essential to his Messianic mission?

It is quite certain that the death of the Messiah was not needful for the setting up of the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God was at hand for all who would enter and conform to the requirements of membership. The simple terms of repentance and faith carried with them the promise of full participation in the blessings of the kingdom. Forgiveness and salvation were offered and accepted without reference to the death of Jesus. It is very certain that the death of Jesus did not appear as a condition of salvation to the thought of the disciples.

But did not the death of the Messiah enter into the secret counsels of God as forming part of his plan of redemption? And as Jesus shared the counsels of the Father did he not in the beginning of his ministry contemplate his death as the chief ground of salvation? While the disciples of Jesus did not anticipate the death of their Lord, was not their salvation nevertheless dependent upon the retroactive effect of the atonement? Such questions are interesting as setting forth the assumptions of doctrinal belief, but they are too far removed from the field of scientific study to admit of serious consideration. We have to do primarily with the facts in the case as these appear in the Gospel narrative. Jesus appears among men as the proclaimer and founder of the kingdom of God. He bids men to enter the kingdom and live as children of God. According to the Synoptists he makes few claims for himself. His person is kept in the background. The burden of his message is the Kingdom of God. He defines its nature, the conditions of membership, and the life of righteousness and brotherly love as its chief requirement. His works conveyed the same lesson as his direct teaching. They were part of his teaching—object lessons—illustrating God's rule of love in and through his kingdom. The purpose of the miracles was not to overawe men by an exhibition of supernatural power,

but to reveal the beneficent will of God in ministering to the needs of men and in alleviating their ills. The teaching and the works of Jesus, therefore, are the highest expression of the will of God. In the doing of that will, as revealed in the words and works of Jesus, men become his brethren (Mark III. 34). This, briefly, was the way of salvation taught by Jesus. Faith in Jesus, saving faith, did not, in the case of the first disciples, include belief in the death of Jesus.

At the same time it may be observed that suffering and death, according to the teaching of Jesus, are necessarily involved in membership in the kingdom. Along with his disciples Jesus becomes subject to the common law of the kingdom. No one can save his life except by losing it.

Death, in this general and ethical sense, is a law of all true human life, and necessarily a law of the Messianic ministry, and so Jesus regarded it. The various references in the teaching of Jesus to a law of suffering and death applicable to all the children of God, who would do his will, may not therefore be cited as proof-texts of an atonement theory.

The Synoptists record no direct reference to the death of Jesus in his earlier ministry. There are two obscure allusions which seem to have forecast the removal of Jesus by violent death. (Mark II. 20 ; Math. XIII. 38-41 ; cf. Luke XI. 29-32.) But these passages offer no serious difficulty. At most they present a vague presentiment of the approaching fate of Jesus, which seems to have made no perceptible impression upon the spirit of Jesus, or upon the mind of his hearers.

Along with the fact of the absence of any direct reference to a dying Messiah in the earlier ministry of Jesus, should be noticed also the marked contrast between his earlier and later ministry as to his manner of life, and the general tone of his teaching. He began his ministry with bright, buoyant, hopeful spirit. He came eating and drinking, as the host, or guest, at a marriage festival. His teaching, while weighted with thoughts of God and his righteousness, was characteristically a joyous message. He was by preëminence a man of good cheer, with gladness in his

tone. It was for this cause largely that the multitudes heard him gladly.

The first explicit mention of the death of Jesus was that which followed the notable confession of St. Peter at Cæsarea Philippi. The event marks a crisis in the ministry of Jesus and in the life of the disciples. From this time onward Jesus is the "man of sorrows." His teaching is set in gloomy perspective. It is pervaded by a tone of sadness and depression. The cross becomes the burden of his thought and speech. Three formal announcements of his sufferings and death are similarly reported by all the synoptists. (Mark VIII. 31; IX. 31; X. 33-34; Matt. XVI. 21; XVII. 22-23; XX. 18-19; Luke IX. 22, 43-44; XVIII. 31-33).

Besides these formal announcements there are no less than fourteen other references, more or less explicit,\* most of which belong to the last week. The effect of the contemplation of his death upon the soul of Jesus appears with peculiar force in his saying: "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished?" (Luke XII. 50.) And so powerfully did the thought affect his mien and manner that they who saw him were struck with amazement and fear (Mark X. 32). Day by day the gloom of sorrow deepened within his soul till it wrung from him the agonizing cry in the Garden. (Mark XIV. 32-36; cf. Matt. XXVI. 36-39; Luke XXII. 39-44). But not even in Gethsemena, while exhibiting obedience, courage and loyalty in highest degree, did Jesus relinquish all hope of avoiding the cruel death which threatened him. He pleads with the Father, to whom all things are possible, to open some other way for the perfecting of his work (Mark XIV. 36).

The foregoing facts, cited from the Synoptic Gospels, are of primary importance in their bearing upon the problem of the necessity and significance of the death of Jesus. They serve well as a safeguard against two extreme views concerning the attitude of Jesus towards his own death. The one is that he began his ministry with the conviction that a violent death

\* Noted by Professor Gilbert, "The Revelation of Jesus," p. 250.

awaited him, and that he clearly foresaw the details of his suffering and death in the order of their occurrence. The other is that he entered upon his Messianic office with no thought of death whatever, and that when confronted with its necessity, he braved it with a martyr's courage, not unmixed with a feeling of disappointment. The former view is commonly assumed by the various theories on the atonement. The main difficulty, which is generally acknowledged by the advocates of this view, is to reconcile the knowledge of Jesus concerning his suffering and death with the omission of any explicit reference to his death until the latter part of his ministry. This is accounted for on the ground that the disciples could not bear the disclosure at an earlier day; that only as they were inwardly prepared to receive the announcement of the Messiah's tragic destiny could it be declared to them. The explanation seems to have much in its favor. It accords with the method generally pursued by Jesus in the training of the disciples. He spoke the word unto them as they were able to hear it (Mark IV. 33). But the explanation does not remove the difficulty. It raises a greater difficulty. Granting that the lateness of the disclosure may have been due to the condition of the disciples, how shall the condition of the disciples be explained? Moreover, the disclosure though late was not accepted. It did not change the thought of the disciples. The hard saying, though oft-repeated, continued to be a hard saying to the end. It was both unintelligible and intolerable.

No, the problem is not solved by asserting that the disciples of Jesus failed to discern, and persistently rejected a truth which the Master plainly read in the Old Testament Scriptures. The disciples, of all men in their day, were the most susceptible to the teaching of the Law and the Prophets as interpreted by Jesus. If suffering and death were distinctly taught by the Old Testament Scriptures as a necessary and conspicuous feature of Messianism, why should the truth be withheld or veiled by Jesus till the closing months of his ministry? And why, when explicitly announced, should it repel and dishearten those who were



especially chosen as fit bearers of divine revelation? These questions are not answered by charging the disciples with ignorance and obduracy, as is so commonly done.

The disciples represented the popular Jewish belief of their day. Nor was popular belief in every instance a misinterpretation of the Law and the Prophets. The doctrine of a suffering and dying Messiah had no place in the Jewish tenets. The sacrificial system did not mean to the Jews, and was not intended to mean, the sacrifice of the Messiah. This statement, which may seem over-strong, perhaps startling to some, is not weakened by an appeal to the Prophets. The prophecies, so frequently quoted in support of a suffering Messiah, if interpreted in the light of their original setting and historical bearing, do not certainly and directly point to Jesus.

Even if it were permissible, as suggested by Keim,<sup>†</sup> to understand the suffering "servant of God" in deutero-Isaiah, to be a personality instead of an ideal community of Israel, that personality of a prophet would be by no means identical with that of the Messiah, the Davidic king of salvation.

Neither Philo nor Josephus make mention of a dying Messiah in their representations of Jewish belief. The single citation from Jewish literature, the second Book of Esdras (VII. 29), cannot with certainty be quoted to the contrary. It is the opinion of scholars generally that the composition of the book is to be placed after Christ, probably in the reign of Domitian, 81-96, A. D.

But whatever its date, the Messiah is represented as dying not until the termination of four hundred years of Messianic rule, when the whole world returns into the old silence. "After these years (400 years of rejoicing) shall my son Christ die, and all men that have life. And the world shall be turned into the old silence."

The testimony of all other Jewish sources is clearly set against the thought of a dying Messiah. The Chaldee paraphrase of the prophets, the so-called Targum of Jonathan makes the servant of God the Messiah; but it takes from him the peculiar character

<sup>†</sup> "Jesus of Nazara," Vol. IV., p. 275.



of the sufferer and transfers it partly to the nation and partly to the enemies of the nation. The Talmudic teachers, on the basis of Isaiah, Zechariah and Daniel, speak of the suffering and lowly condition of the Messiah, which precede his glorification; of an atonement and intercession for Israel; and also of his wounds, stripes and tears; but they know nothing of his dying.\* It was no surprise to St. Paul to find that a crucified Messiah was everywhere an insurmountable obstacle to the Jews (1 Cor. I. 23), for similarly had it confronted his own thought before his conversion.

The evidence, taken as a whole, points very decidedly to the conclusion that the Jewish Messianic doctrine before and contemporary with the rise of Christianity did not include the conception of a suffering Messiah. This is the view generally maintained by scholars who are recognized as authorities on the literature bearing upon the subject. It is strongly confirmed by Schürer. "In not one of the numerous works discussed by us have we found even the slightest allusion to an atoning suffering of Messiah. That the Jews were far from entertaining such an idea is abundantly proved by the conduct of both the disciples and opponents of Jesus (Matt. XVI. 22; Luke XVIII. 34, XXIV. 21; John XII. 34). Accordingly it may well be said that it was on the whole one quite foreign to Judaism in general." †

In taking into account so largely the Messianic beliefs of the Jewish people prior to and in the time of Christ it is not intended to find in these beliefs the measure of the Messianic conceptions of Jesus. At the same time the person and teaching of Jesus can be rightly studied only by making proper account of the age to which he belonged, and of which he was in a very real sense the product no less than the prophet. Faith in Jesus Christ, as Son of God, can never be strengthened by the exclusion or violation of any of the properties or laws of normal manhood. The "historical Christ" includes all that belongs to the term "historical." This truth is very clearly presented by Dr. Harnack in his recent work: "What is Christianity?" "Jesus

\* *Ibid.*, p. 227.

† *The Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ*, II. : ii, 184-187.

Christ and his disciples were situated in their day just as we are situated in ours; that is to say, their feelings, their thoughts, their judgments and their efforts were bounded by the horizon and the framework in which their own nation was set, and by its condition at the time. Had it been otherwise, they would not have been men of flesh and blood, but spectral beings. \* \* \* To be a man means, in the first place, to possess a certain mental and spiritual disposition, determined in such and such a way, and thereby limited and circumscribed; and, in the second place, it means to be situated, with this disposition, in an historical environment which in its turn is also limited and circumscribed. Outside this there are no such things as 'men.' It at once follows, however, that a man can think, speak, and do absolutely nothing at all in which his peculiar disposition and his own age are not coefficients" (pp. 12-13).\*

To this law of humanity and of history Jesus was no exception. He was a Jew, and as such was, to a certain extent, heir to the Messianic ideas of his people.

The Priesthood of the Messiah was not an accepted Jewish tenet at the time of the rise of christianity. It was not till the latter part of the apostolic age that even christians perceived the applicability of the title "priest" or "high-priest" to Christ.† It is equally certain that according to the Jewish belief rejection and death formed no part of the Messianic programme.

Is it not a valid inference that Jesus shared these beliefs, while at the same time he rose superior to the unspiritual politico-ecclesiastical aspirations which were prevalent in his day? The view is strongly supported by the general character of the earlier ministry of Jesus, marked as it was by the joy of a wedding season. The spirit of elation in which he proclaimed his evangel seems clearly to indicate that he entered on his mission with the hope that his message would find comparatively rapid and extensive

\* To do justice to the eminent author quoted, it should be added that in immediate connection (pp. 16-17) he claims that Christianity is vastly more than the mere outgrowth of contemporary history.

† See Stanton: *The Jewish and the Christian Messiah*, pp. 128-129, 294-297.

acceptance. As the anointed Prophet he would be recognized and welcomed by the chosen people, and through them the kingdom of God, with its leavening power, would gradually pervade and assimilate the nations of earth.

It is not inconsistent with such joyful hope of success for the Messianic message that Jesus should foresee and foretell the hardships, sufferings, even persecutions unto death which would be incident to a life of faithfulness in the kingdom. The necessity of suffering as a gracious discipline and as a requirement of the ministry of love and righteousness was doubtless a settled conviction in the mind of Jesus at the beginning of his Messianic career, and he surely must have anticipated the disappointment and hostility which would result from the contrast between his own spiritual ideas and the materialistic and unholy conceptions of the dominant religious party of the Jews. But it is very improbable that the necessity of his death, especially in the form of crucifixion, with its revolting cruelty and extreme humiliation, was contemplated by Jesus in his earlier ministry. Wendt strongly affirms his belief that at the beginning of his career the necessity of his death did not occur to Jesus, "far less the thought of so early and so dreadful a death." \* Dr. Stevens also, but more cautiously, expresses his belief that Jesus did not at first expect the tragic fate, and that his conviction of its inevitableness grew with the increase of hostility to him. †

Horton and Fairbairn arrive at the same conclusion as the result of their Gospel studies. ‡

Only after repeated fruitless efforts to win his nation to himself by his teaching and beneficent works, did the necessity of cruel suffering and a violent death become a fixed conviction in the mind of Jesus. The fate of the earlier prophets (Luke XIII. 33 f.; cf. XI. 47 ff.), and the recent tragic death of the Baptist, must have strengthened the conviction that a similar fate was in store for himself. The presentiment of such a destiny

\* "The Teaching of Jesus," Vol. I., p. 397.

† "The Theology of the New Testament," pp. 131-132.

‡ "Teaching of Jesus," Vol. I., p. 212. *Expositor*, Fifth Series, Vol. IV., p. 283.

distinctly appears in the parable of the Wicked Husbandman (Mark XII. 6-8). And this thought was uppermost in his mind when he propounded to his disciples in the region of Cæsarea Philippi the question: "Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" The response proclaimed the Messiahship and Sonship of Jesus with a certainty and clearness not before attained by the apostles; but its chief significance lay in the fact that it served as the occasion of the new and hard lesson which the disciples of Jesus must learn. From that time he began to show to his disciples that he must go unto Jerusalem and suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. (Mark VIII. 31; cf. Matt. XVI. 21; Luke IX. 27.)

This was the first explicit announcement of the death of Jesus. From this time on to the close, the shadow of the cross rested heavily upon his soul. The Synoptists each present the thrice-repeated saying of Jesus concerning his death, and with like explicitness set forth the predictions which, with precise detail, trace beforehand the several stages of the Passion. Assuming that Jesus began his work with a knowledge of his death as predetermined, by similar knowledge he could readily foresee and foretell the several incidents leading up to it. But this we do not believe. How, then, shall the Synoptic narrative be explained? Some explain the explicitness of the predictions as due to later recollection of actual events. Others see in the narrative the words of Jesus so modified by revisers as to serve as an apology on the part of the Church for the Messiah's death.\*

It would aid in removing the "stumbling-block" of a crucified Christ, if it could be shown that Jesus had himself predicted his end in conformity with ancient prophecy. One may not dismiss these attempts at explanation as utterly groundless, but they are not the last nor best resort of exegesis.

While it is possible that the Synoptic representation of the predictions of Jesus may have been influenced by the recollection of events as they happened, yet the explicitness of the predictions is not of such character as to preclude a very natural

\* Carpenter: "The Synoptic Gospels," p. 374.

and reasonable knowledge on the part of Jesus. He thoroughly comprehended the situation. He knew what was in men. And it required no supernatural knowledge to foretell the course of events.

Once convinced of the immovable purpose of the hierarchy to reject him as a false Messiah, he clearly foresaw the series of events as they came to pass in the order of their actual occurrence, leading step by step to the act of death.

He foresaw as part of the plan of the Jewish authorities his apprehension and arraignment before the political tribunal, and that he would be rejected by the Gentiles. Mockeries and cruelties would naturally accompany the two-fold rejection. With certainty he foresaw that the severest punishment of the Romans, death by crucifixion, would be inflicted upon Him. The cruelty and ignominy of the world's deepest curse alone would satisfy the wrath of his enemies. All this came upon the vision of Jesus by natural and correct anticipation and entered into the experience of his soul long before the members of the Jewish hierarchy had determined upon their precise plan of action. It may even be said that Jesus foresaw the whole series of events which lay before Him in the *Via Dolorosa* as the fulfilment of prophecy. Not, however, as the result of prophecy.

This brings before us another problem and one which is beset with peculiar difficulty.

There is a group of sayings ascribed to Jesus by the Synoptists which at first sight seem to prove that Jesus accepted the necessity of his death as a fact distinctly foretold in scripture. "And how is it written of the Son of Man, that he should suffer many things and be set at naught?" (Mark IX. 12). "For the Son of Man goeth, even as it is written of him" (Mark XIV. 21; cf. Matt. XXVI. 24). "All ye shall be offended; for it is written, 'I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered abroad'" (Mark XIV. 27; cf. Matt. XXVI. 31). "This which is written must be fulfilled in me, 'And he was reckoned with transgressors'" (Luke XXII. 37). "How then should the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" (Matt.

XXVI. 54.) And the saying which has been regarded as the most convincing of all: "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Behooved it not the Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke XXIV. 25-27).

If the necessity of the death of the Messiah be accepted as a foregone conclusion then the passages cited above present no difficulty whatever. They give strong confirmation to the assumption. It would then seem plain that Jesus derived the thought of suffering, and even the certainty of his death, from the Old Testament, even though contemporary Jewish teachers saw there no such doctrine concerning the Messiah. While this view is very old and bears the seal of traditional theology, I am not a little surprised to find that it is held by so careful and discriminating a scholar as Professor Gilbert.\* He does not, however, make any attempt at argument in support of the belief, which seems entirely out of harmony with his general views concerning the teaching of Jesus.†

The use which Jesus made of the Old Testament Scriptures could not have been contrary to their meaning and purpose.

I cannot believe that Jesus meant to employ the Scriptures to prove that the certainty of his sufferings and death should be read in them, much less read into them, any more than I can believe that Jesus suffered and died by the constraint of prophecy. Prophecy, if true, must ever be in harmony with the nature and purposes of God. God is love. His purposes are purposes of love. His will concerning man is that he should attain to perfection by the full realization of the ideal of manhood. The history of the people of Israel, so far as God had to do with its call and guidance, was a preparation for the coming of the Messiah, the perfect man, in whose *life*, primarily, God's will concerning man

\* "The Revelation of Jesus," pp. 254-255.

† In the more recent work of Professor Gilbert "The Student's Life of Jesus," which has just come into my hands, the view referred to above, is modified, if not abandoned. Page 276.



should be revealed. This, likewise, was the purpose of the Law and the Prophets. In Jesus Christ they were fulfilled. They were fulfilled in his life of perfect holiness and love.

Had Israel proved true to its divine mission, and thereby fulfilled the purpose of God, the Messiah would have been accepted and the crime of the crucifixion would not have been enacted.

God sent his son into the world to be loved, not to be hated; to be accepted, not to be killed. The sacrifice of the Messiah was not a price which God demanded for the opening of the kingdom of heaven. There is some ground for the protest which Beyschlag raises against the traditional view that "Heaven was first opened by the abstract fact of Christ's death, and forgiveness rendered possible, and the angry God transformed into a heavenly Father."\* Neither in the Gospels nor in Old Testament prophecy can there be found any warrant for the belief that the necessity of the death of Jesus lies in a fixed purpose of God, which shaped the course of history so as to culminate in the tragedy of the cross. The notion contradicts the idea of divine holiness and justice, and can in no sense be reconciled with the love of God as Father.

The citations which Jesus made from the Old Testament may not, therefore, be interpreted in a fatalistic sense, as directly predicting and enforcing his sufferings and death. To come to a clear understanding of these passages it is necessary, above all else, to have a correct conception of the nature of Old Testament prophecy and of Jesus' method of using it. To discuss this subject now would lead us too far from our present study. I would here simply suggest that when Jesus became fully aware that the pathway of suffering and death was opening before him, he read in his own experience the fulfilment of the scriptures which foretold the sufferings of a righteous people, or of a righteous king; and further, that the conceptions of the prophets, far beyond their own conscious knowledge, came to full realization in Jesus as the ideal of the Messianic kingdom.

As a result of our Synoptic study, and as a summary of the

\* N. T. Theol., I. 159.



main points in the discussion, I submit the following statements:

1. The mission of Jesus was to establish the kingdom of God among men, primarily by his life of perfect righteousness.
2. The Messianic consciousness of Jesus did not necessarily include the consciousness of his sufferings and death. The latter probably unfolded gradually with the increasing hostility of the Jewish hierarchy and the growing unsusceptibility of the people to the more spiritual aspects of his ministry.
3. The death of Jesus was not a fate suffered in conformity to the determinate counsel of God, nor is it specifically taught in the Old Testament Scriptures.
4. The doctrine of a suffering Messiah was not current in pre-Christian Judaism. It became a Christian tenet as an accommodation to the facts of history.
5. The necessity of the death of Jesus resulted from the exigencies of history, and was due mainly to the passions of sinful men.
6. The Synoptic Gospels give no rationale of the death of Jesus. Implicitly they teach that the incarnation, in the actual circumstances of humanity, carried with it the necessity of Jesus' death.

Jesus died because he loved righteousness, counting no sacrifice too great for its defense and attainment.

Jesus died because he loved mankind. His death crowned the complete self-surrender of his life.

I would yet add that the purpose of the foregoing treatment of the sacred theme, on the basis of the Synoptic Gospels, has not been to abate in the least degree but rather to exalt the significance and efficacy of the death of Jesus Christ.

#### IV.

### THE GENESIS OR CREATION OF MAN.

BY PROF. CYRUS THOMAS.

(Read before the Ministerial Association of Frederick, Md.)

The discussion of the creation of man in this paper, which relates almost wholly to his physical nature, will be from the Christian standpoint, subject to the limitations imposed by the acceptance of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion, and the acceptance of the Bible as the revealed word of God, the liberty of such personal interpretation as does not conflict with these fundamental doctrines being allowed.

Turning at once to the Bible, to ascertain the limitations there imposed, we find the following statements: Gen. I.: 26, 27: "And God said let us make man in our image, after our likeness. \* \* \* So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." And in Gen. 2: 7: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

Allow me to say here that the cases when "created" is to be interpreted "produced, or made from nothing" are not to be determined from the word *per se*, but from the connection and subject-matter, as it is repeatedly used in these two chapters interchangeably with "made," and sometimes with "formed."

Returning to the Scripture statements quoted, it is necessary for us first to decide whether we consider that of the first chapter as referring to a different creation from that mentioned in the second, or as referring to one and the same creation. Without stopping to discuss the point I assume—as I believe you will accept as correct—that both refer to the same genesis of man, for it seems unlikely that there were two separate creations of man. The question as to whether or not the two chapters are

parts of two different accounts is not material here, as, if two, they are still accounts of one and the same creation, which is the only point under discussion here. Therefore the second statement, which is the more specific, must be taken to be, to this extent, explanatory of the statement in the first chapter, and as forming the limitations under which our discussion must proceed. Here God is expressly named as the Author or Actor, the action is defined by the word "formed," man is the object or result, and "the dust of the ground" the material agent; the work is completed by breathing into his nostrils the breath of life. The only part, therefore, of the statement—"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground"—which admits of any material difference of opinion, limiting the discussion for the present to man's physical nature, is contained in the word "formed." Of course it may be assumed and argued that the statement is figurative and the account merely an allegory. While we do not doubt that some of the expressions in this Biblical account of the creation are to be considered more or less figurative, our discussion at present is based on the usual somewhat literal interpretation.

It is probable that a considerable per cent. of, or at least many, minister of the gospel, if asked what was the origin of man would content themselves by answering in the words of Scripture which we have quoted. But when asked the further question, *How* did God form man? What were the steps of the process? would be unprepared to express an opinion. Yet it is evident from the fact that an intermediate agent—"the dust of the ground"—is mentioned, and that the word used to define the action is "formed," that the work was accomplished by some process. God did not say as in making light, "let man appear," and man was, or sprang into being. Forming one thing out of another implies a process of some kind be it ever so short, or of indefinite length. Therefore as the *how*, the *process* of man's formation has not been revealed, the subject is left for investigation and study; and any conclusion reached must hinge chiefly upon the interpretation of the word "formed," subject to the limitations mentioned.

*How* then was man formed? What were the steps of the process? That it was not by a single Almighty fiat, without an intervening agent, is too distinctly stated to admit of discussion. Having therefore reached the conclusion that God by some process formed man's physical nature out of earthy substance, the question arises: Was it by means of, and in accordance with the natural laws he had so far implanted in physical nature, or was it by a wholly miraculous and supernatural act? Be it remembered, however, that whatever be the conclusion reached, it is to be understood the power is ever from God and is by his will and wisdom guided.

If the work were wholly miraculous and not through the operation of natural laws, still, as earth was the material used, there must have been transformation, though the process were instantaneous or prolonged; and the process by which this transformation was brought about may be entirely beyond our comprehension, yet the extent of that change is within our grasp. And though the resources of the Almighty are infinite we may be able to eliminate some of the theories which are suggested to finite intellects.

It is probable that the first thought that arises in the minds of many, possibly of most persons when they read the passage quoted, is the idea of moulding the clay into the form of the human body and then imparting life to it—breathing into the nostrils the breath of life. This idea, I repeat, probably arises in the minds of many persons when reading this passage, even though it may be rejected on more mature reflection. But is such an idea, though it may seem to accord with the literal interpretation of the language, consistent with reason and the character of our Creator so far as we are able to judge of it?

At first thought the idea of forming out of earthy material a human-like form, seems to imply the use of hands, but this the mind rejects. We may suppose that God commanded a portion of this earthy material to form itself into the human shape, or, in other words, caused it to do so by his miraculous power, and we admit his power to do so. But what does such an idea involve?

In either case it would be necessary that this earthly material should be changed into bone, muscle, nerves, blood, etc., which constitute man's physical nature. Unless suspended by Divine Power the inherent attributes of matter, although the form and uses were changed, such as extension, weight, attraction, etc., would necessarily be retained, and to this extent at least, though the formation was miraculous, it would have been subject to natural laws. More than this; it would be necessary that there should be imparted to it the laws requisite to its existence, as those of nutrition, reproduction, etc. As this is based on the supposition of a wholly miraculous formation we admit that God was able to have brought about the result, as his wisdom and power are infinite. But why, when wholly miraculous, was it necessary there should be the intervention of a material agent? Why were the natural laws which were implanted in the physical universe, and which were evidently used, at least to some extent, in the production of plants and animals set aside in the formation of man though from the same material, and a wholly miraculous process resorted to? If natural laws, which are after all only God's laws operating through material existence, were not brought into play in this formation, then no valid reason for the introduction of a material agent is apparent. If wholly miraculous, it would have been as consistent with God's character and attributes, and apparently more so, to have formed man at once by simple fiat without the intervention of a material agent; as to use such agent, and wholly discard his natural laws in the formation. It may be said that he chose to use a material agent of his own good pleasure. This is merely begging the question, when the inquiry relates to *how*; it is simply a method of breaking off the inquiry and abandoning the discussion. Though we are unable to understand all the reasons in the Divine mind for Divine actions, we are justified in assuming that all these actions are wise and based on good and valid reasons, and are justified in carrying on the examination along these lines.

If the formation of man's physical nature were wholly miraculous, and not through the operation of natural laws, how are we

to account for the fact that this physical nature conforms, even to minute details, with that of the higher animals? I am fully aware that I am trenching here on disputed ground, but I proceed upon the assumption that every fact in nature has a valid reason behind it. Why should there be such close similarity of the human frame in all its parts to that of the higher order of animals? Why subject to the same laws of nutrition and reproduction, unless to conform to a plan formed by the Divine mind? And if a plan, what reason is there for assuming that the human body was formed by a wholly miraculous method, and not through the operation of natural laws, God giving the impulse and directing their operation? The only limitation of the text is "formed \* \* \* of the dust of the ground," unless we assume that "in the image of God" applies to the physical nature, which I presume will not be claimed. True there must have been a beginning point behind which we can only predicate Divine Power. Life on earth must have had a beginning, and it is only to Divine Power we can attribute this. So in tracing back plants and animals we must reach a point where they had a beginning, and whatever theory we may adopt as to the *how*, Divine Power must stand behind as the operating cause, the source from whence the vital force proceeded. This is admitted, but it is equally true that Divine Power acts along lines consistent with reason and in accordance with Divine laws, except where, in order to manifest to intelligent creatures his power even over nature, he temporarily interrupts, miraculously, these laws. It must be borne in mind that at the time of the formation of man, natural laws, including those relating to life, were in operation; precisely the same laws that were to govern in his continued existence. Hence there was no necessity for creating anew these laws for man's behalf, but simply the application of them to him.

This view of a wholly supernatural formation of man, under whatever shape it may be presented, appears to me to be inconsistent with infinite wisdom, and to detract from the higher, and, as I think, nobler view which holds that law runs through all of God's acts; that he works by and in accordance with his own

laws and plans, excepting in those cases only where the special object in view requires miraculous action. It seems to imply inability to form a comprehensive plan, and institute general laws sufficient to carry out the details of this plan and produce the desired results. This it seems to me would be a greater evidence of wisdom and power than the implied necessity of resorting to miraculous action.

The idea that God, even when exerting miraculous power, must have something to work on bears to me too much resemblance to the superstitious belief which has floated down through the ages, that magicians and necromancers could counteract natural laws and mimic by supernatural power natural forms, but not without a material basis on which to work, be it ever so small.

It is true we must face this same point even more explicitly set forth and more fully detailed, in the account of the formation of woman as given in the second chapter.

This, I confess, presents points difficult to explain, and if a strictly literal interpretation be insisted upon, then we will be compelled to fall back on the wholly miraculous theory. While I do not look upon the statement as an allegory, or as a simple metaphor, I do consider it as a figurative method of representing a natural truth. However, I will only give my reasons in part at this point for this belief.

If we adopt the miraculous theory, we shall find some exceedingly troublesome obstacles to be overcome, some difficult points to be explained. That God could have taken a rib from Adam's side and thereof formed a woman we admit, but the question presented is this, are we to take for granted that the text represents literally the process of the formation of woman? How was the rib taken from Adam's side? It may be said that it is unnecessary to descend to these particulars, as God was able to perform the work in any way he chose. Admit it, yet a process of some kind is clearly indicated—"and he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof"—Gen. 2; 21. Here again the idea of hands opening the flesh with some sharp instrument seems to be implied, but of course this must be rejected. Did



the Divine Author of man's existence actually open Adam's side in any way, extract the rib and close up the flesh? Again it is said, "And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man made [literally 'builded'] he a woman." Here again we have the same idea that in performing a miraculous work God must have a physical basis, be it ever so small, on which to build. The rib must be made to change into bones, flesh, nerves and blood and become a living woman with all the natural conditions and faculties necessary to continued existence. God might have commanded the rib to come out of man's side and become a woman; but the language, if accepted literally, clearly implies several distinct steps in the process, "and he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof." It is evident that an opening of the flesh is one step implied; removing of the rib another; closing up the flesh another; and changing the rib into a woman with all her necessary physical faculties another. Steps in the process are clearly implied whether instantaneous or prolonged. In addition to this we are to bear in mind that the first step was to cast the man into a deep sleep, implying the necessity for, at least, a limited space of time.

Is it not on too low a plane to be consistent with the idea of Almighty Power, Infinite Wisdom and an infinity of resources? Is it not more consistent to consider it a figurative account of a great natural fact to bring it to the level of human conception at that but partially enlightened age? And how are we to bring it in harmony with a great comprehensive Divine plan, under which we know that that which was formed was ultimately brought? Was Divine Power and Wisdom unable to formulate a great comprehensive plan and adequate laws to bring about the intended result? Surely not. The difficulty lies in our inability to so interpret the account as to be consistent with these laws and plans, so far as human investigation has been able to determine them.

Notice also what follows—vss. 23, 24—"And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. *Therefore*

shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh." In what sense shall we construe the "Therefore"? Are we to assume that every wife is linked by formation or by nature to her husband as Eve was to Adam, if we take the words in the literal sense? In the 27th verse of the first chapter it is said "male and female created he them." The object of the account of the formation of the woman, seems to be a reference to the fact that mankind by the laws of their nature go in pairs, as the means of continuing the race. The idea of a primary union of the sexes in one person is found in the mythology of more than one ancient nation, but how far it is legitimate to use this fact as explanatory here must be left for each one to decide for himself.

Now, so far as we are able to see, man's formation must have been brought about in one of three ways: First, by means of, or in accordance with, natural laws; second, by a wholly miraculous method, or third, it was partly by miracle and partly through the operation of natural laws, God in all cases being the source of the power operating and directing it to the intended result, the word "miracle" being used in the sense of without the aid of natural laws or forces.

As the mediums which the Creator before man's appearance had brought into existence were matter or material substance, light, energy or force, and life, which latter may be designated a peculiar form of force, this force or peculiar quality being of of separate origin. Already the laws governing these forces and the lines along which they were to act had been defined. The earth had been commanded to bring forth the plants after their kind, and the waters and the earth were commanded to bring forth the various kinds of animals. We may assume from Gen. 2:5 that God had formed the seed or germs of the plants before they grew, but will this apply to the "cattle" and "beast of the earth"—1:24? In Gen. 2:19, it is said "And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every fowl of the air," precisely the same agent being used as in the formation of man and the same word to express the operation.

But the same operation is expressed in Gen. 1 : 24, by the words "let the earth bring forth." Now as this is followed by the words "living creature," must we adopt the Miltonic idea and suppose that all at once beasts and cattle of the various kinds sprang forth from the ground in full-grown vigor and life?

God said,

"Let the earth bring forth soul living in her kind,  
Cattle, and creeping things, and beast of the earth,  
Each in their kind." The earth obeyed, and straight  
Opening her fertile womb, teem'd at a birth  
Innumerable living creatures, perfect forms,  
Limb'd and full grown; out of the ground up rose  
As from his lair, the wild beast \* \* \*  
Among the trees in pairs they rose and walked.

What part, under this supposition, would the earth play in the operation? This would be the result only of an Almighty fiat and not in accordance with the command, "Let the earth bring forth." The latter implies process, the operation of implanted laws, the impulse of course being given, or action directed in the particular line, by the Divine influence. *How* then did "the earth bring forth" the cattle and the beasts of the field? What were the steps of the process? The development of the plant from the original germ implanted in the earth, without other aid than natural laws and forces, we know is possible, and this is also true of some of the lowest forms of animal life, but not so of the mammals, that is of the cattle and beasts of the field. God, so far as we can judge from natural history, had provided no way for the early development of the individuals of these higher orders of animals except through the mother precisely as is the case with man. It may be said God is infinite in resources; that is true, but when he has limited himself by a specific plan, are we to assume, in order to meet a theory we have formed, that he has broken away from this plan? We are therefore limited to one of two suppositions—*first*, that these higher animals were brought forth by a wholly miraculous method from earth in full stature and vigor; or *second*, that they were developed in some way through natural laws and forces, God giving the impulse

and guiding the operating forces. It is noticeable that nothing is stated respecting the animals in regard to sex, unless it be inferred from the words "be fruitful [from the verb 'to bring forth'] and multiply." The idea therefore of a wholly miraculous formation seems to be excluded, the fair and legitimate conclusion being that the language indicates a formation by means of natural laws, God giving the impulse and directing the operating forces.

As the same agent was used in the formation of man as in the formation of the higher order of animals, and precisely the same word—"formed"—is used to express the operation, and man's physical nature corresponds in general, and also very closely in details, with that of the higher animals, why should we suppose the process to have been different, except so far as may be required by the words "in the image of God"? What reason can we offer for the theory that God formed man (we speak only of his physical nature) by a wholly miraculous process, yet destined him to be fitted into that plan of structure which he had adopted, and to be governed by the same laws? The great argument of Christians for a Divine Author of the universe is the systematic order maintained and the evidences of inimitable and great comprehensive plans. The fair and reasonable conclusion, therefore, seems to be, that in the formation of man God operated through natural forces and in accordance with those laws he had, up to that time, implanted in physical existences. However as our argument has so far been chiefly on the negative side it is necessary in order to see the result of this conclusion to look to the positive side and if possible give a reasonable explanation of the *how* consistent with natural laws.

Having discussed the subject chiefly from the negative side, that is by presenting reasons against the theory that the work involved in the formation of man was wholly miraculous, we turn now to the positive side and will try and present briefly our reasons for believing that man was formed chiefly through the action of implanted forces and in accordance with natural laws. It must, however, be borne in mind that in the introduction or in-

ception of any new agent, new force or new law the direct application of Divine Power is admitted.

After the first verse (Gen. 1 : 1), which seems to be a general statement, but which includes, without further detail, the creation of matter, the account proceeds chiefly with reference to the earth and earthly objects, turning aside only to notice the introduction of light, and the chief sources of light, and these only with reference to their relation to earth and its inhabitants.

We are told that the earth was at first "without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep." It is evident from this that the earth was not, by the first Divine act, brought into its complete form and condition; the work was to be completed by bringing the elements into order and in their proper relations one to another.

The waters which were then probably in a diffused state, possibly in a steam-like condition about the globe, were to be brought into proper relations to perform the work they were intended for. This is implied in the 9th verse which indicates that dry land had not yet appeared. Part of the waters were to ascend as clouds to give rain upon the earth, and the great mass to be gathered into the vast depressions to form the oceans and seas, leaving between the two the aerial expansion called the firmament.

Now are we to suppose that in this preparatory work any new or additional substance was created, or any new force introduced, save that implied in the creation or genesis of light? I think not; it was arranging not creating. As the evidence that God operates in accordance with self-imposed plans and with specific designs in view are too evident to be denied, and are to the Christian the strongest unrevealed evidence of Divinity; are we to assume that these plans gradually formulated themselves in the Divine mind as he proceeded with the work of creation? Or shall we take what seems to be the higher and nobler view that Infinite Wisdom saw the whole from the beginning; that not a wheel or cog in the vast machinery was unprovided for in the one, the first, great comprehensive plan? It seems legitimate there-

fore to assume that when God created physical existences he implanted all the laws and attributes necessary to work out his designs regarding them, save the element of life. Not in the sense, however, that he put the mighty machinery in motion and then, as it were, withdrew himself, but kept his hand ever on the lever of power. Not a wave rises on the sea, not a wind sweeps over the land, not a tiny blade of grass pushes up through the soil, nor an earthquake shakes the hills without the force being in touch with the Almighty Hand.

We must now distinguish between law and force; hitherto I have used the term law somewhat loosely but here it is necessary to make the distinction. Although we have assumed that, with the creation of matter God had implanted the forces, save that of life, necessary to work out his plans, it does not follow as a necessity that all were at once put in operation. The steam of the engine does not commence to drive the machinery until the engineer turns it on with the lever. When the earth was without form and void the energy was doubtless there, though it may have been in part dormant. At least we assume that it was necessary that the Divine will should direct and start it on the lines along which it was to operate; and then it brought order out of chaos. Even the production of light may have consisted in giving to æther the power to transmit it, or it may have been the creating of æther. In one case it would have been adding a new attribute, in the other a new element, hence in either case an act of Divine Power. Life may be and probably is a form of energy, but energy with an added quality or attribute that required a Divine creative act.

Let us turn now to the formation of plants and animals.

In regard to the first the language is: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth." We may assume that the order in which the three different classes are mentioned is merely accidental, but this seems to be forbidden by the specification—"yielding seed"—added to herbs; and—"yielding fruit after his kind whose seed is in



itself"—added to tree. These specifications can receive no adequate explanation unless the order be intentional. The term "grass," as used here, I take to mean the primary vegetation, the lower orders of plants, and not grass in our present use of the term. Gesenius gives as the primary meaning of the Hebrew word "the first shoots"—moreover as nothing is said in regard to seed, this interpretation seems to be justified, in fact the absence of true seed seems to be implied. If this interpretation be correct, the other two classes—"herb yielding seed" and "fruit tree yielding fruit, \* \* \* whose seed is in itself," would be in ascending order; and this is substantially the order in which plants are arranged in scientific classification, and in which geology shows they appeared on earth. We may assume from Gen. 2 : 5 that when the command was given to earth to bring forth plants God first formed the germs, but was this continued through the vast geological ages during which new kinds continued to make their appearance?

Though the plants are arranged, in the account, into three classes yet there is but one command, "let the earth bring forth," whereas in regard to animals there are two commands "let the waters bring forth," "let the earth bring forth." The double command, in the latter case, however, appears to depend upon the element referred to and not to the classes of animals.

We may assume, and I think legitimately, that with the command to the earth to bring forth plants went that life-force, that additional force of energy necessary to their production. But is it necessary to assume that an additional command should be given and a new force added whenever a new kind of plant appeared? That new kinds did appear at immensely separated periods we know positively from the geological evidence. In fact from the first appearance of the lower forms to the appearance of the first tree "whose seed is in itself," was beyond any reasonable question an immense stretch of time. This is admitted by all geologists, Christian and infidel, evolutionists and anti-evolutionists. Yet from the language of Gen. 1: 11, the one command given to earth at the commencement of plant life seems to have accomplished the entire



work. God was certainly able to put into operation a form of plant life-force with such laws that it would, without a new creation, be capable of adapting itself to the mighty geological changes that were to follow its introduction. Gradual changes in the soil and climate would produce gradual changes in the species, and as these changes went on and on, and as there was no return to former conditions the variation would continue. Had there been no attempt to interpret that portion of the Bible relating to this subject, until this day of advanced science, it is probable this view would have been accepted with comparatively few dissenting voices. At any rate it seems that some such view must be adopted or the one command "let the earth bring forth, etc.," must have continued on and on through immense ages or have been repeated thousands of times, and even in the first case it would be the same as implanting this property of flexibility in the earth or plant-life. Either the one act performed the whole work or it did not; we must choose between the two. For myself I prefer to believe that God, by the one act, was able to put the living force in operation with such inherent laws of adaptation as would suffice to carry out the command to its full and ultimate extent.

Turning to the creation of animals we notice first that instead of one command to "bring forth," as in the case of plants, there are two. I had usually supposed that the reason for this related primarily to the different classes of animals, but more mature study has led me to the opinion that the chief reference is to the different elements, the "waters" and the "earth," though corresponding in results with the classification of the animals. Here water is not included in the term earth, a clear distinction being made. It is only necessary to add here in regard to the animals brought forth by the waters, that the term "whales," vs. 21, is a translation which seems to be based on the Septuagint and not on the Hebrew, as the latter has, as its primary meaning "a great serpent, a dragon" and is used for "a water-serpent, a sea monster, a dragon." In Amos 9:3, it is translated "serpent"; Psal. 148:7, "dragons"; Isa. 27:1, "leviathan or crocodile," the

Hebrew having no proper term for crocodile, etc. This brings the Scriptures in harmony with the classification of animals, the whale being a mammal and not one of the lower orders of vertebrates, the animals referred to under both commands being apparently, chiefly, if not entirely, of this branch of the animal kingdom.

Considering therefore, as I think we may properly do, the two commands as having reference to one general subject—the origin of animals—the remarks in regard to the origin of plants are equally applicable here. The commands must have continued in effective operation during an immensely long period of time, or have been repeated thousands of times during the vast geological ages that intervened between the appearance of the lower forms and the advent of the higher classes. However, there are other facts necessary to be taken into consideration in discussing this subject, a few only of which can be mentioned here.

Animal life is dependent upon vegetable and animal food for existence and this must be appropriate to the different species or they cannot exist. For instance, bees could not exist until flowering plants had appeared; carnivorous animals could only exist after the appropriate animals for their food had appeared; those depending upon fruit trees for food could not have existed until such trees made their appearance, etc. When the earth was throughout in a warm and humid condition and the only tree-like plants were gigantic ferns, great bulrushes, etc., which bore neither true seed nor fruit, there could have been no animals whose diet consists of fruit. Hence it is evident that unless there was some law of development and adaptation, acts of creation must have been repeated many thousand times. If the command "Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear," was sufficient to carry on through immense ages the wonderful changes which finally resulted in bringing the earth into the proper condition for the abode of the higher animals, and for man himself, could not Divine Wisdom and Divine Power have formed the vital forces and adequate laws which would bring about the changes

in plant and animal forms adapted to these changing conditions? Or must we suppose it necessary for the Almighty to have recourse at each of the thousand changed conditions, to new creations of plants and animals adapted to these new conditions?

As it is not supposable that changes in living forms govern or bring about changes in earth conditions, we must suppose that changes in earth conditions bring about adaptation in life conditions. The most consistent theory would seem therefore to be that which assumes that God implanted in the life forces and laws of life progress a certain degree of flexibility by which they would be able to adapt themselves to the constantly changing earth conditions.

This we admit is virtually the doctrine of evolution—the assumption of the capability of the life-forces, brought into action with the introduction of plants and animals to gradually modify specific forms so as ultimately to bring about the forms now existing on the earth. There is nothing in this view, it seems, that is in conflict with the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion, or contrary to a reasonable interpretation of the Bible language. The great book of the physical universe so far as correctly demonstrated, must agree with Divine Revelation when properly interpreted.

This view, call it evolution if you will, appears to me, taking into consideration the known facts of physical existences, to be more nearly in harmony with the Bible language than the view of repeated creations not mentioned or alluded to, and which interprets “let the earth bring forth,” as in the case of the beasts of the field, so as to leave the earth no part to play in the work. If these beasts were made at first of full growth and complete form, then it must have been a special, miraculous act of Divine Power, in which earth could do no more than simply furnish the material, its laws and forces taking no part in the process. “Bring forth” would under this theory have no signification.

But it will be said we must finally get back somewhere to the beginning forms, where the law of adaptation will not apply.

This is certainly true; and it is as certainly true that when this point is reached we must recognize the Divine creative hand—for we have reached the point in time where the commands “Let the earth,” “Let the waters,” “Let the earth, bring forth” were given. You ask, is not the same difficulty to be met in accounting for the formation of animals at this point, as for those of the higher type? By no means. The primary types are to the animal kingdom as the seeds are to the plants, yea even more simple, but germs without indications of sex, or differentiated parts. These could live and develop as readily and as surely as the seeds and sprouting plants. The stretch from these tiny germs to the sexual land mammals we admit is an immense one, but the commands “Let the waters” and “Let the earth bring forth” after God, by creative power, had installed the life-force and imparted to it the necessary laws, were sufficient to accomplish the work. Consider the entire animal kingdom from beginning to close as one race, as a unit, is there really anything more wonderful in looking upon these changes as a development of the race from its infantile state to full growth, than there is in the life development of an individual higher animal? The life of the butterfly is sealed up in a tiny casket not larger than a pin-head, which develops a tiny worm, to grow to the caterpillar with biting jaws, then to be changed into a dormant chrysalis, and finally transformed into a butterfly with a sucking mouth. Had not these different forms been connected by observation, would they not have been classified as widely different species? Has not the God who has the wisdom and power to implant into the life-stream which runs through this specific butterfly channel the laws requisite to bring about these wonderful changes, the wisdom to devise and power to implant in the life-stream of the entire animal race the laws necessary to accomplish the changes which have occurred through the vast geological ages? Remember, “The Lord is a great God, and a great king above all gods.” However, I must turn to man lest my paper shall stretch out to too great a length.

That the formation of man had something in it different from

that of animals is certainly to be understood from the Scripture statement, and that this difference required the direct intervention of Divine Power must be admitted. This we do not believe is to be so positively inferred from the formation of man as given in Gen. 2:7, as from the statement in Gen. 1:26, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." It is in the words "in our image, after our likeness," we believe the distinction—and it is a very great one—is to be found. In the account of the formation of the different sorts of plants and animals it is said "after his kind," "after their kind," but here there is a decided and remarkable change implying the additional element of being that raises the created to the similitude of his Creator. An addition as great, yea even greater than the original addition of the element of life to physical nature.

What was this added element? It was that moral nature capable of discerning between good and evil, that form of being belonging to the spiritual realm and possessed of the attribute of immortality, a creation as real, and if, with all proper reverence, we may compare Divine acts, more remarkable than the formation of living creatures. But does admitting this make it necessary for us to assume that man's physical nature was an entirely new and altogether miraculous creation? By no means. It is as consistent with the Divine nature so far as we are able to judge of it, and of the language of Scripture, that man's physical nature was developed from the animal kingdom in its upward evolution under the commands "Let the waters bring forth," "Let the earth bring forth," as to suppose there was an absolutely separate, miraculous creation. In either case it would be from the dust of the ground.

Evolution upward along clearly defined lines and in accordance with a well-defined plan, can be predicated only on Divine Power and Divine Wisdom. It is impossible to maintain such a process on the theory of the materialist. There is nothing of which I am aware, in the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion and a reasonable interpretation of the Scriptures, which forbids us from supposing that God thus formed man of the "dust of the ground," and when the physical nature had reached

its proper form and condition imparted that additional element of being which linked him with the spiritual realm. Moreover such a supposition presents fewer difficulties than the supposition of a miraculous creation; and in addition furnishes a complete explanation of the fact that man's physical nature is in accordance with the same general plan, and like, even in minute details, the physical nature of the higher order of animals. That God "formed man of the dust of the ground" is distinctly stated; that this relates only to man's physical nature will be admitted, and no one, I presume, will contend that "in our image, in our likeness" applies to this physical nature; therefore the whole question relating to man's physical existence is embraced in the word "formed" and the *How* is left to our investigation. Of course we can only use our reason, our knowledge of the facts and laws of nature and our knowledge of the Divine methods, and Divine plans so far as they can be ascertained from nature and revelation. We may err in our conclusions but so long as they are fairly reached and reasonably legitimate, we are within the bounds of the limitations we have found prescribed. We keep ever in view the fact that God is the author, and that he never releases his grasp, and never fails to carry out his plans.

Taking this view, man's spiritual nature becomes as it were an entity, a real creation, and although we are forced to believe that this spiritual nature is transmitted from parent to child through birth, this does not necessarily do away with the supposition that it is an entity and immortal in its nature. Life in the plants and animals and also in man's physical being, is a continuous stream, a vital force passing on and on from individual to individual. Why, therefore, is it not legitimate to assume that man's spiritual life in his present state of existence, is also a continuous stream passing from individual to individual? This provision in nature for the life force in physical beings to pass from individual to individual, pertains only to the earthly state of existence; why then may not the provision for the spiritual life to pass from individual to individual, if this be the method of transmission, be limited to the earthly state of existence? Not that the spiritual life is lim-

ited to this state of existence, but that the law of transmission is so limited, for we believe, from revelation, that this spiritual life continues in the future state. Is not this idea of a stream implied in the words (Rev. XXI: 1) "And he showed me a pure river of water of life clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the lamb"? The spiritual stream purified.

But you may say the individual animals including physical human natures die, return to dust and cease to exist, though the stream of life passes on into new individuals; how then, from a parity of reasoning, can it be explained that the individual spiritual nature of man continues to exist? If the stream of physical life passes on, dropping by the way the physical forms it brings into being, why shall we hold that the same thing is not true of the spiritual forms which the stream of spiritual life brings into existence? I admit the difficulty of giving, or even of formulating a satisfactory answer. If we were able to handle, analyze and study spiritual nature as we are the physical existences we might be better prepared to give a satisfactory reply.

Here we must enter the domain of faith, carrying with us such indications as may be drawn from the data within our reach. I can give now only one illustration which it seems may be, to some extent, applicable, reasoning from analogy. The seed of the plant falls into the ground, germinates, produces a plant which grows to full size and maturity; it produces other seed which bear within themselves the same specific form of life as that contained in the parent, and which has been transmitted to them by that parent plant. Now suppose this stream of life to have had added to it the element, law or attribute of immortality, never-ending existence, would not precisely the same form of life be transmitted to the individual seeds? Reasoning from analogy the answer would be Yes.

It is undoubtedly true, as Paul tells us in his comparison of man's physical body with natural seed, that the latter "is not quickened except it die." Now if God had implanted the element of immortality in animal physical life, would Paul's illustration hold good? Would not the life of the human body have



been eternal? It certainly would have lived on until an Almighty decree ended its existence. In other words its law of existence would have included immortality, just as matter is eternal in its nature, and will not cease to exist except through the Almighty decree, as it came into existence by a similar decree. Is not the evidently symbolic statement in Gen. 3: 22, most easily explained on this mode of reasoning?

From this method of reasoning, if the spiritual life of man is immortal in its nature, the life of the individual spiritual natures must be immortal unless limited by an Almighty decree; to die, as in case of the physical forms, will not be a law of their nature.

There is still, however, one other point in this illustration not to be overlooked, which is all important. Naturalists and physieists of all classes, Christian and infidel, evolutionists and anti-evolutionists, are now generally agreed in considering both matter and force as eternal in their nature—the Christian philosopher while holding a beginning by creation, admitting continued existence until this is ended by the decree of the Infinite Creator. Life both physical and spiritual (of man) must be, so far as we can see, forms of force with the peculiar life elements and laws implanted in them. Our argument will therefore be completed by one additional assumption. As these life-forces are eternal in their nature, becoming extinct only by Almighty fiat, we have only to assume in accordance with the evidences both of nature and revelation, that a limit has been fixed by the Divine decree to the physical life-stream; but that no limit has been fixed to the spiritual life-stream, that while it passes from individual to individual in this life, being once imparted to the individual spiritual nature, the individual seed, so to speak, it cannot cease to exist therein. Therefore, while natural laws and forces are used, their operations are directed by the Divine will and their limits determined by his decrees. It is God's work throughout, and all in accordance with his plans.

Finally, our true notion of woman must be drawn rather from the statement in Gen. 1: 27, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female

created he them"; than from the statement in the second chapter. The latter appears to be a figurative representation of the necessity for and origin of sexual distinction, and as this relates only to the physical existence and earthly life, it presents no difficulty on the theory of man's physical development from the animal forms. Moreover this supposition explains the development from the asexual or non-sexual to the sexual condition. The language of our Saviour seems to imply that sex shall be unknown in the future life—Mark 12: 24–25, "Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God? For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven." The idea of a former union of sexes in one individual, as before stated, appears to run through the mythology of many different peoples. The heavens and earth being the two sexes in many mythologies. How this is to be accounted for I will not now undertake to say. Nor is it easy to explain satisfactorily the words of our Saviour, "because ye know not the Scriptures" in the connection they are found.

On the one great point, however, we can all agree—God was the author of all existences, physical and spiritual. He is the source of all power, and ever remains the Ruler and Guider of the universe, "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life." Jno. 1: 3, 4.

V.

IS BAPTISM A CREATIVE ACT OR MERELY A DECLARATORY RECOGNITION OF A STATE OR CONDITION PREVIOUSLY EXISTING?

BY CYRUS CORT, D.D.

When the writer studied theology and entered the ministry in the early sixties, the leading exponents of theological thought in the Reformed Church, such men as Rev. Dr. John W. Nevin and Rev. Dr. Henry Harbaugh, taught that there was a positive grace connected with the administration of Christian baptism; that it was in reality the sacramental sign and seal of the regenerative activity of the Holy Ghost. In his great speech on the liturgical question before the General Synod at Dayton, 1866, Dr. Nevin made an effective appeal to the elders, reminding them, in ringing words, how their German forefathers had laid so much stress on "Taufgnade." Baptismal grace was, with them, a precious reality, a real transfer from the power of darkness into the kingdom and covenant of God's dear Son.

The sacraments, as Dr. Harbaugh so grandly declared in his great speech at the mother Synod in York a short time previous in 1866, are not empty signs and seals without a corresponding reality in the Church of Jesus Christ. Even in the ordinary affairs of human life signs and seals are supposed to stand for something. You see a picture of a boot and shoe over a shop door. You enter and inquire for boots or shoes. The owner tells you he has none for sale. Would you not at once remark, with some degree of indignation, What do you mean by displaying such a sign in the face of the public if you have no such articles on hand for sale? You would be tempted to say, You are a fraud and a humbug, and if the shopman would reply that the sign of the boot and shoe was intended to represent the fact that boots and shoes were to be had somewhere else but not where

they are specially advertised, by the banner on the outer wall, you would think that the man had lost his senses and was to be pitied rather than to be blamed. Such was one of the illustrative arguments of Dr. Harbaugh, thirty-five years ago. The arbitrary separation of the sign from the thing signified may accord at times, with the temper and caprice of false and fallible men, but such separation can find no warrant in the institutions and appointments of the Almighty. He is not a man that he should lie.

In accord with all this, our Heidelberg Catechism emphasizes the reality of sacramental grace and the verities of our holy religion when it declares in answer to Question 66, "Sacraments are holy visible signs and seals, appointed of God for this end, that He may the more fully declare and seal to us the promise of the Gospel, viz., that He grants us freely the remission of sin and life eternal, for the sake of that one sacrifice of Christ, accomplished on the cross." The precious promises of the Gospel, negative and positive, as they are substantially comprehended in the remission of sin and the gift of eternal life, are more fully declared and sealed to us in the use of the Holy Sacraments. Holy, visible signs and seals appointed of God for this very end are these Christian ordinances. With this the Westminster standards of the Presbyterian Church fully agree.

Answer 92 of the Shorter Catechism states that "A Sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ; wherein by sensible signs Christ and the benefits of the new Covenant are represented, sealed and applied to believers."

Answer 94 states that "Baptism is a Sacrament wherein the washing with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, doth signify and seal our engrafting into Christ and partaking of the benefits of the Covenant of grace and our engagement to be the Lord's."

We are then told that Baptism is to be administered to persons outside of the visible Church who profess their faith in Christ, and to infants of such as are members of the visible Church.

We have referred to the intimate relation between sign and thing signified when we have to deal with truthful men and the God of truth and grace.

The Germans call the Sacraments "*Wahrheitszeichen*," "Truth Signs" to guard against rationalistic ideas that tend to empty them of all positive grace and blessing. But even more expressive than "sign" is the term "seal" as applied continually to definitions of these divine appointments, especially when we bear in mind the legal force and meaning of seal with its authenticating power in the olden time. The Sacramental transaction visibly authenticates the promises of the Gospel.

A will or written contract without seal or signature would be fundamentally defective but becomes legally binding with sign or signature and seal duly affixed, so is it in the new and better Covenant of grace and salvation. The sign manual of the Triune God authenticates all the promises of the Gospel to us as proper recipients of Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

The Sacraments are not empty signs or counterfeit seals. They are truthful representations and authentications of blessed and glorious realities.

Whether you call it "Grafting into Christ," as stated in the Westminster Confession, or "The Washing of Regeneration," as the Heidelberg Catechism tells us (Answer 71) the Holy Ghost calls baptism in the Scripture, or Baptismal Regeneration (a rock of offence in many quarters), it matters little.

These terms are synonymous for all practical purposes. They indicate that Christian Baptism is the rite of initiation or sign and seal of our incorporation into the new and better Covenant of grace and salvation which contains the very substance of good things hoped for by Patriarchs and Prophets under the old Dispensation.

Unless language is an invention to conceal thought, as the unprincipled French diplomatist maintained, Christian Baptism stands for something definite and positive; it marks the transition from nature to grace, from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son—As St. Peter tells us we are saved in

baptism as Noah and his family were saved in the Ark. It is a saving ordinance provided we do not make the grace of God therein signed and sealed of no effect through our unbelief and disobedience.

Now over against this Scriptural and orthodox position of Reformed theologians and Confessions we have in recent years a new doctrine promulgated or rather a modification or expansion of an old doctrine is being set forth by some of our religious teachers. In the *Messenger* for November 1, 1900, we are told by the editor of the Christian Endeavor column that "leading thinkers in our Church have come practically to the belief that the rite of baptism simply declares the fact of the Fatherhood of God and solemnly bears witness to the fact that this child is His child. The rite does not make the child God's child, it simply recognizes and declares the fact, etc."

Then we are told that those who hold to what is called Baptismal Regeneration teach that a new life and character are imparted by baptism which secures regeneration, as the editor asserts, in an arbitrary way.

This sounds very much like a caricature of the views of those who hold with the catechism that "Baptism is the washing of Regeneration" as the Holy Ghost calls baptism in the Scripture. Who has ever taught that "character" was imparted by baptism, as a regenerative act? Character is something to be acquired by an ethical process of Christian culture and not imparted to beings endowed with reason and will, the elements of personality. And wherein is the abstract method of regeneration less arbitrary than the churchly or sacramental? In keeping with other remarks calculated to disparage and dispense with baptism is the statement of this C. E. editor that "It is probable that infant baptism was not practiced in the days of the Apostles."

The question naturally arises, Why should it be practiced now if it does not stand for anything real or positive in the Church of Jesus Christ? Why does the New Testament enjoin it upon penitent believers and their children as a condition and channel for the remission of sin and the gift of the Holy Ghost?

In harmony with the views advanced by the C. E. editor we find deliverances in the REFORMED CHURCH REVIEW for July, 1899, pages 887, etc., which seem to endorse the views held by Washington Gladden in this country and certain English theologians of questionable orthodoxy. They hold that baptism is not creative of a fact but declarative. An infant is not baptized that it may become a member of Christ and a child of God, but because it is such, possessing a spiritual nature that is constituted in Christ and has not been subverted by sin." And then we are told what our experience and observation for fifty years as well as all the Reformed rubrics for baptism flatly contradict, viz., that "the Church has always baptized any children brought to her fonts, without asking any questions in regard to their parentage. It is not the fact that it has had Christian parents that gives it the right to baptism but the fact that it is a human being created in Christ Jesus," etc.

If this is not Pelagianism what is? Regeneration, in the language of Robertson, whose views are endorsed, is defined to be "the conscious recognition of the fact (previously existing) of the Fatherhood of God." In other words all men have been regenerated but they do not know it. They are not aware of the fact until the Church assures them of it. This view goes far beyond the position set forth in the Pastoral Letter endorsed by the Maryland Classes and subsequently by the Mother Synod at Carlisle, Pa., in 1840. In that letter it was contended that all children of professing Christians are members of the visible church by virtue of their birth in a Christian family and that baptism is simply the public recognition of the existing fact of membership.

"Their membership is not founded on their baptism," we are told, "but their baptism upon their membership." No wonder that Rev. Dr. B. C. Wolff, after he became professor of theology at Mercersburg, felt a good deal scandalized by this Pastoral Letter to which his name was attached along with that of Rev. Dr. Elias Heiner and others. He had signed the document, it seems, under protest or with serious mental reservations which



became more decided when he learned that Dr. Heiner, the chairman, had virtually adopted the views of some unchurchly, rationalistic revivalist and had embodied them in the Pastoral Letter.

That was before the days of Dr. John W. Nevin and his teachings on sacramental grace and educational religion as set forth in Reformed Church standards. At the Baltimore Synod, 1867, Dr. Nevin moved that a certain minister be remanded for trial to his Classis for setting forth Robertson's unsound views, which are now paraded as superior to Reformation and Apostolic teachings on baptism. But some of our modern theologians teach that not only children of believers or professing Christians are members of Christ and children of God, independent of Christian baptism, but that all human beings are such and are to be baptized without regard to parentage or guaranty of being brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord! This theory seems to ignore all distinction between nature and grace, the flesh and the spirit. That which is born of the flesh is no longer flesh but spirit without the activity or intervention of supernatural and sacramental energies pertaining to the new and better covenant established by the great head of the Church for the healing of the nations. St. Paul, according to this view, was mistaken when he discoursed so grandly upon the special prerogatives and privileges accruing to the Gentile converts through their incorporation into the Christian Church.

Instead of being as in times past "by nature children of wrath," as he reminded the Gentile disciples at Ephesus, "being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world" they now are "no more strangers and foreigners but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundations of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into a holy temple in the Lord—in whom ye are all builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit."

In the view of the great Apostle union with the Church of

Christ through baptism and the laying on of hands see (Acts 19: 1, etc.) has made a fundamental change both in their condition and relations corresponding to that wrought in behalf of foreigners by the process of naturalization in the body politic. Does a foreigner become endowed with the prerogatives of American citizenship by natural birth, or even by cultivating patriotic sentiments and by profound study of the laws and history of our country? No! there must be an objective act, a formal transaction before the alien becomes a citizen.

He renounces allegiance to the despotic or monarchical government in the old world to which he previously belonged. He vows allegiance to the laws and constitution of this great Republic and then the Court issues the decree constituting him a citizen whose rights and privileges the entire power and authority of the nation must uphold at home and abroad. It is a simple process occupying a few moments, but what a wondrous change in the status of the individual? His naturalization not merely recognizes rights of citizenship, previously existing, but creates them and clothes him with the panoply and prerogatives of citizenship. So by Holy Baptism we are incorporated into the Church of Jesus Christ; the covenant promise of the remission of sin and the gift of a new and eternal life by the sacramental energies of the Holy Ghost are made good to us and to our children if we do not make the grace of God therein vouchsafed of no effect through our unbelief and disobedience. In the abuse of our privileges we may sell our birthright for a mess of pottage but that does not make void the grace and promise of God unto all who are obedient to the faith. Baptism is always an act of faith either on the part of the adult recipient or of representative sponsors. Reformed Church rubrics always require the presence and response of parents or guardians to the formula in infant baptism. The grace of baptism is the antidote for the fact of original sin. "Where sin abounded grace hath much more abounded, etc. As we have borne the image of the earthly or first Adam, so may we and must we bear the image of the second or heavenly Adam—"Marvel not that I said unto you ye must be born

again." That which is born of the flesh is flesh, human nature under the power and dominion of sin, and flesh it must remain unless a hand from heaven lifts it out of the miry clay and sets its feet upon a rock and puts a new song in its mouth. "That which is born of the spirit is spirit. Verily, verily I say unto you except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." See this REVIEW, October, 1889, pp. 486, etc.

Human governments may fail to secure us in all our legal and just rights of person and property, but nothing on earth or in hell shall be able to separate us from the covenant love and protection of the God of our salvation. We may forfeit or squander our spiritual inheritance by unbelief and disloyalty to the Captain of our salvation, but that does not nullify the precious fact that in baptism we have a spiritual birthright signed and sealed to us which no power in the universe can make void if we prize aright the inheritance of the saints in Christ Jesus our Lord. In order to explain the difference between a child of Christian parents before and after baptism the Pastoral Letter propounds a theory of election, which, whether taken in a human or divine sense, by no means fits the case or helps the argument. The unbaptised person, we are told, is a citizen of the state elected to office but the ceremony of induction into office remains to be performed which is accomplished in baptism.

This is an arbitrary separation of what God has joined together in the covenant of grace and salvation. We do not hold to any such abstract theory of election. We are both elected and actually incorporated at once into the kingdom of God's dear Son through holy baptism. We become heirs of God and joint heirs through Christ when we become members of His mystical body, the Church. Not only the Reformed and Presbyterian but Methodist and other denominational standards declare baptized children members of the Church entitled to Christian nurture and subject to her spiritual authority.

The unscriptural and illogical separation of signs and seals from the divine reality which they are appointed to represent

and authenticate in baptism, can, with the same consistency, be applied to the sacrament of the body and blood of our blessed Lord and Saviour.

Are the sacraments empty signs or outward recognitions merely of what we already possess independent of their reception or use? Is Christian baptism merely the recognition of gifts already at hand in every child of Adam or does "Taufgnade," "Baptismal grace" really stand for something distinctive, a genuine spiritual reality in the Church of Christ? Assuredly here as in the Holy Communion we can say "We have to do not with outward signs only but with the heavenly realities themselves which these signs represent." The terms and circumstances of their institution and the experience of the best Christians in all ages, as well as the whole analogy of the faith, requires and constrains us to maintain this view against all rationalistic objections. If the process becomes successful of emptying the sacraments of their supernatural contents and inherent necessity, as component parts of the New Testament Church, we may soon expect proposals to set them aside as merely temporary outgrowths or "products of the life of the early Church." The neglect of infant baptism and public profession of faith will assuredly result from the adoption of these views. Wherever Puritanic or rationalistic views of baptism prevail there infant baptism is woefully neglected, as statistics of New England Churches prove.

In the old historie Reformation churches, where baptismal grace and educational religion are cherished as the corner stones of the Apostolic commission, infant baptism is diligently observed.

If children have already, by natural birth as members of the human family, or even as members of Christian households or by abstract decree and election of the Almighty, all that baptism represents and conveys in the covenant of grace and salvation, then what use or necessity for its administration? If sacraments in general are not grace-bearing ordinances for worthy recipients, but only represent grace or spiritual blessings already possessed by recipients, what use to go through the make-believe ceremony? This is the way plain, honest people will argue and act.

It behooves us to magnify the grace of God in every form in which it confronts us in the covenant of salvation—Blessed be God who gives His promises to parents and children and confirms them in grace by His holy sacraments! If we eat and drink unworthily at the Lord's table, because we fail to discern the Lord's body in the sacramental transaction, surely we must beware lest we rob the washing of regeneration of its rightful import and spiritual efficacy. To speak of regeneration, which is a divine act, as simply the conscious recognition of an existing fact, is to confound objective and subjective, the experimental with the sacramental, what God does with man's conscious activity in religious matters. To relieve quibblers objecting to the phrase "Baptismal Regeneration" we say we believe in Holy Ghost Regeneration, sacramentally signed and sealed in Christian Baptism. And we believe that the great body of our Reformed pastors and people hold the same position and earnestly keep in view these ancient landmarks of our Reformation fathers.

## VI.

### THE NECESSITY OF DOCTRINAL PREACHING.

BY REV. A. ZIMMERMAN, S.T.D.

It does seem strange that we should be compelled to observe two quite different phenomena in the work of pulpit ministrations, and at the same time fail to see the vital connection between the two. On the one hand we are told that the day for doctrinal preaching is past, that our times demand practical sermons, and that practical Christianity should be placed in the foreground. That there is very much truth in this presentation of the matter we will not venture to deny, for it is a simple fact that we need practical preaching. The pulpit is to give instructions for the practical duties of life, and is to point out the best methods of solving all the difficult problems that are constantly confronting us. In so far we need practical preaching. But it should be remembered that a practical sermon is not a sensational sermon. The difference between the two is great. By practical sermons, as the term is often used, is meant discoursing on all sorts of sociological and ethical subjects to the exclusion of what may be called distinctively biblical teaching and doctrine. Thus literary tastes and various other fancies find their way into the pulpit rather than discourses on the relation of man to God.

When the matter is presented to us from this point of view, we cannot refrain from disagreeing with those who loudly call for practical sermons as distinguished from doctrinal ones. It may be possible to emphasize the practical phase of Christianity to such an extent that this term becomes a misnomer. The practical needs a foundation on which it can rest; or we are in danger of making that which should be preëminently practical a species of the theoretical. This seems to us the danger of very much present-day preaching, especially of the practical school.

When we go to extremes in one direction, there is usually a

tendency inaugurated to go towards the extreme in another direction. Too much doctrinal preaching of the past may be one reason why we have too little of it now. But it is often said the people will not listen to a dry doctrinal sermon. Neither do they desire to listen to a dry sermon of any other description. I have heard exceedingly dry "practical" sermons. The merely theoretical sermon that poses as doctrinal is no guide for the preacher. It is, moreover, a fact that theories and fancies are not limited to doctrines, as they are found in abundance in declaimers of the practical. If it is true, which we do not unconditionally grant, that theories of doctrines have no place in the pulpit, we also point to the equally tenable position that theories of social order have no more right. The contention is not, it should be remembered, between the theoretical and the doctrinal, but between the doctrinal and the practical. To doctrinize is not to theorize, but to set forth the truth of revelation.

On the other hand we are told that the pulpit is losing, and to a great extent has lost, its power; that the influence of the pulpit is waning. Now if both of these contentions that we need practical instead of doctrinal sermons and that the power of the pulpit is waning be correct, is it not a noteworthy fact that they should be so synchronous? Should not this lead to some sober reflection? May there not be some sort of interdependence between the two? May they not mutually aid in bringing about the situation so generally deplored? If the pulpit is losing power over the people may it not be simply because it is known to be catering too much to the changeable desires and opinions, or that underneath its preaching there is lacking a solidity, and people do not desire to build on the sand? May not the fact that there is so little doctrinal preaching be one of the causes leading to the decline of the pulpit? We are not now discussing whether the pulpit has lost or is losing its prestige; we are simply assuming that there is some truth in the cry, and that there must be some reason for the change of attitude on the part of the pew. Since these two phenomena appear so synchronously it is only natural to suppose that there is some real connection between them.



It should be remembered that the Christian religion is pre-eminently practical *because* it is based on reasonable and sound doctrine. It is true that our religion should dominate every sphere of human activity. It should be a ruling power. It must be a ruling power if it is to be anything at all. But if we take away the doctrines of the Christian religion, we will have little left that will appeal to the thoughtful mind. If it is asserted, and this is constantly reiterated, that the truth of our religion has a bearing on the life of the individual, it should be remembered that this presupposes a rational doctrine founded on divine revelation. Otherwise that revelation cannot amount to much. And the life without the doctrine must be exceedingly shallow. We need something more than mere impressions; we need opinions that rest on convictions. The preaching of the doctrines as found in the word of God will do more than all else to awaken life and bring the soul into contact with the living Christ. We must set these teachings in their proper relations. If so set forth they will appeal to the mind and the heart. Mere instruction in ethical duties given in a religious mold will not supply a sound basis for moral action, for Christian ethics rests on a deeper doctrinal basis. And that preaching is most rational which is most truly doctrinal; and that is conducive to the highest ethics which is most thoroughly saturated with the sublimest doctrines.

If there is any value in the claim that the Christian religion offers salvation to man it is necessary to have correct ideas of the scriptural doctrine of salvation. If that doctrine is vain preaching, the Bible contains the vainest revelation. If it is true that sin separates man from God, we need to know the revealed doctrine of that separating sin. The doctrine of sin touches the influence of sin. If there is an atonement why stand shy of that doctrine and then wonder why people will not come to church any more as they used to when that doctrine was preached? Rightly presented doctrinal preaching is preëminently practical preaching. It deals with facts of human experiences in the light of the revelation of God to man. Doctrinal preaching presup-

poses all the postulates of religion. It does not argue concerning them. It treats of all the relations of man in such a way that they will appear at once natural and in need of divine direction, but most supremely of that direction itself.

The Old Testament is a very practical book. The various phases of social and political problems are given due attention. In fact, the Old Testament religion can not be divorced from everyday life. Its practical phases are seen in the law, in its history and in its prophecy. But underlying all these practical elements there is a strenuous and consistent demand for a correct conception of Jehovah, the God of Israel, for proper ideas concerning man in his relations to other men and to God, for the true doctrine of sin and its consequences. True, not always with the same degree of clearness, yet persistently in the same direction. Its doctrine and its life are not divorced. From the very beginning sin is set forth as heinous in God's sight. Abraham is called to leave the home of his idolatrous relatives so that he may learn to know Jehovah better and understand his requirements more thoroughly, so that through the advantages thus gained he might be able to realize the mission of his life. The lesson from the life of Abraham is lost if we set the practical before the doctrinal or elevate the former so far above the latter as to obscure it. The doctrine forms the basis for the practical life, and this life if it fulfills itself in the doctrine, will prepare the way for clearer perceptions of the truth. Hence, non-doctrinal preaching is apt to emphasize sentimentalism instead of intelligent faith in the living and true God.

The distinction is frequently pointed out that Christianity is a life and not a doctrine, and that the personality of Christ is the living power and not the doctrine concerning Christ. Indeed, Christianity is a life rather than a doctrine; but it is a life because it is inseparably connected with vital doctrines. How do we come in contact with the living personality of the Christ so that His life will be infused into our being? Is such a thing conceivable apart from any doctrine of the Christ or our relation to Him? We need faith in the personality of Jesus. But we

need more. Faith is not a sentimental affair. Faith in the personality of Christ implies a doctrine. And the presentation of this doctrine so as to produce faith in the living Christ is doctrinal preaching. If we believe in this vitalization of ourselves by Christ we form some conception of His work within us, or the work of the Holy Spirit, and forthwith we have a doctrine. We correct impressions and seek to gain assurances out of the word of God: we make doctrinal investigations. To present the result of these doctrinal studies in a living form is doctrinal preaching. This preaching is intended to confirm the hearer in his faith and lead him to new conquests, and also to induce the unconverted to enter into this vital relation with Christ on the basis of the instruction given and the conceptions of Christ and His relation to man formed by these instructions.

We need to observe further that doctrinal preaching includes the living Christ and does not exclude Him as some would have us suppose. There is no doctrine of Christ possible, if it is to be a complete doctrine, without including Christ as a living personality. Christian life does not presuppose doctrine, except as its foundation, but Christian doctrine presupposes the rearing of a corresponding structure in life. Christian life is impossible except on the foundation of corresponding doctrines, as these bring us into relation with the eternal realities if we do not check their influence. It is true that doctrines can be held without a modification in life; but this is only true when the doctrine is simply a formula, and faith a mere intellectual assent for the purpose of appearing pious when there is no corresponding reality within. Doctrines should be so presented that this difficulty may be overcome as much as possible and that men may be honest in their convictions as well as true to their convictions. Life apart from doctrine will not better matters any. The life itself may be as superficial as the doctrinal assent. The doctrine is the fount whence the life flows. Let the doctrine stagnate and life becomes stagnant.

The objection is sometimes raised against doctrinal preaching and the indoctrinating of the youth that this will predispose the

mind in favor of certain forms of doctrine rather than others. This may be granted. It need not be denied. But when we are told that only facts should be presented and interpretation omitted, we would point to the fact that the text-books on the sciences are not only fact-bearing but also decidedly interpretive. The untrained mind needs this constant assistance in interpretation of facts lest it loses its way in the wilds of fancy. So in theology as well. The ordinary mind needs doctrinal instruction so that it may have the needed assistance and not sink into the quagmire of doubt and despair. In the pulpit and in the Bible class we need more than mere presentation of facts and phenomena, but the bearing of these facts is to be presented that the proper interpretation may become more clear.

We must not overlook the fact that not all interpretation is Christian doctrine. The interpretation may explain the doctrine away or obscure it. Doctrinal preaching and teaching must be instructive in the essentials and fundamentals of our religion. Dogma in the modern sense need not have a prominent place in doctrinal preaching as that is dominated by the speculative tendency rather than the unbiased presentation of the revelation of God's truth. Nevertheless it, too, has its large field of legitimate work. In the pulpit we need most emphasis placed on the doctrines of revelation as they concern man in all the struggles and trials of life. Then doctrinal preaching will be practical as well.

The kind of preaching that will last longest and will accomplish most good is doctrinal preaching. People are not so easily tired of it as is usually supposed. A proper balance needs be observed. It is to be feared that the difficulty lies with the preacher as much as with the hearer. May it not be true that too many are afraid of the hard work to be done for good practical preaching, and are too easily satisfied by spending an undue portion of the time in making social calls in the parish and a consequent contenting of oneself with exhortations rather than preaching "sound doctrine?" Philosophy and theology are too often avoided and looked upon as too dry. It is the opportunity of the preacher to go into that valley of dry bones and make

them live so that they will be presentable to an average congregation. It will then be a matter that has entered the very life and soul of the preacher and taken possession thereof so as to form a living doctrine. Because it is living, it is practical. It is believed with the whole soul. And because it is so believed it will be preached. And when so preached it will edify.

## VII.

### THE CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY OF THE FUTURE.

BY REV. A. S. WEBER, D.D.

Christian theology is the systematized expression of the truths of the Christian religion. Such theological expression being a human product, always bears the marks of man's imperfection. His limitations in the knowledge of truth in general and of Christian truth in particular, as well as his limitations in the power of interpreting and coördinating them in a system leaves, necessarily, defect and incompleteness in his work. Hence the dissatisfaction with which systems of theology have ever sooner or later met. Hence also, the constant renewal of effort to improve upon previous systems so as to make them if possible approximate somewhat more closely to the demands of enlightened reason, and the needs and temper of new times.

In the recent past theologians have been particularly active in their endeavors to restate in more adequate form the doctrines of the Christian faith. There has been special cause for this activity. The steady growth of modern scientific knowledge; the widely increased acceptance of the theory of ascent from a lower to a higher stage as the explanation of history; the investigation of comparative mythological and religious systems; the results of biblical criticism; the more exacting standards of proof introduced by the so-called historical methods of our day in distinguishing between fact and fable; and the large numerical increase of those who have the confidence and intelligence to exercise independent, individual judgment—all these have had a share in bringing about changes of thought and opinion that have profoundly altered large portions of belief, thus not simply inviting but compelling the revision of many theological formulas.

Hardly any of the great Christian doctrines have escaped modification under the influence of these modern movements in

thought. The conception of God, the doctrine of the Trinity, the nature of the Incarnation, the person of Christ, the theory of the fall, of sin, of death, of the atonement and of eternal salvation—all have felt the touch and quickening power of a new life, and under it been more or less transformed. This progressiveness of thought is of course in harmony with a thoroughgoing Protestant idea of the function of faith which implies the necessity of ceaseless development of doctrine no less than of life. Given its full sway that idea allows no blinding traditionalism under the guise of fidelity to the past to impede the forward movement of soul which cannot live without progress, and which as related to theology shows itself in new scientific expressions or formulations of the truths it holds, and of the doctrines it teaches. McCaulay in a well-known passage represents theology as "hermetically sealed" against "Progress, man's distinctive mark alone." But his representation is very unfair to the strictly Protestant conception of theology, which holds with a Latin poet "that there is nothing so dangerous, because nothing is so revolutionary and convulsive as the strain to keep things fixed, when all the world is by the very law of its creation in eternal progress." Protestantism accepts the dictum of Herbart that "the truth lies before us, not behind us," and therefore looks forward, not backward. It always expects "more light" to break not only from "the Holy Word," but under the guidance of the Eternal Spirit from history and science and personal experience as well. "Immer nur auf dem Wege, niemals am Ziel," as Professor Duhm, of Basel, describes the live theologian, theology itself, when keyed to true spiritual life, is not a stationary or finished science, but one so thoroughly vital as to be forever dissatisfied with its own highest thought and knowledge, and ever pressing on to loftier and worthier conceptions of God and of His relation to man and the universe.

To a certain order of mind this forward movement, this unsettling revision of ancient and long-accepted doctrinal statements, has brought great distress and anxiety. Those belonging to that order are not simply deeply disturbed by present conditions of



religious faith as expressed in modern form, but that which they expect in the future fills them with serious misgivings, almost overwhelms them with dismay. Is there valid ground for being so apprehensive as to the future outcome of present tendencies in thought? Are the indications of moral and religious life resulting from doctrinal teaching so portentous? Are present-day theologians in their efforts to carry out to a logical conclusion the principles of the Protestant Reformation, establishing the fallacy of those principles? Are they hastening on the day when the heroic men of the sixteenth century shall stand convicted of error, and be then regarded universally as they now are by our Roman Catholic brethren? Not for a moment can we bring ourselves to think so. On the contrary, as seen from what has already been said, we belong to those who look hopefully toward the future, who see ground for rejoicing in what is regarded as true progress in the expressions of the religious faith of to-day as compared with those of the past, and who greet with feelings akin to enthusiasm the dawn of the future which promises achievements in Christian thought worthier of both God and man than those for which the present day is as yet prepared.

Among the more prominent characteristics or outstanding features of the theology of the future there are several which notwithstanding one's consciousness of the limitations of theological prevision, present-day tendencies enable one with some confidence to forecast, and to which, without incurring the charge of assuming the rôle of a prophet, one may perhaps venture, in justification of the optimism just expressed, to call attention.

1. As to *spirit* the Christian theology of the future will be constructive, hospitable and devout. Its constructive spirit will manifest itself in conserving with utmost fidelity the unquestionable truth of all previous theologies. Gladly and gratefully will it use the same to preserve the continuity and consistency of true progress. In doing so its eyes will not be closed, however, to what in the elaborate confessional systems of earlier centuries does no longer answer to the demands of a living Christian consciousness. It will seem iconoclastic in dealing with exploded theories such,

for instance, as the traditional ones of "Theopneustia," of the Canon, of the Fall, of Death, and of absolute divine sovereignty, plans and decrees. Cherished idols of that sort which have so long been desecrating the temple of human thought must be cast aside before the truth in purer form and nearer the equivalent of the spiritual reality can command the reverence of those who approach its sacred shrine. Some branches of systems existing to-day through which the sap of life is no longer pulsing must be lopped off, and others overgrown with the leafy foliage of doubtful tradition must be pruned. But to call this destructive is to misunderstand both the spirit and purpose of the process. It is the only method for purifying and enriching the fruitfulness of the tree of Christian thought. It will probably make the creedal list of facts to which the coming theology will subscribe somewhat shorter than those to which our forefathers were, or we are, accustomed to assent. It will lessen the lateral boundaries of belief, but its increase in depth and height will do immeasurably more than compensate for that.

This spirit of conserving the truth of the past will be aided and advanced by the hospitality with which theological thought in the future will welcome truth into its service, no matter what the channel through which it comes from the Source of all truth. The theologies of the past, and the greater portion of those of the present, have used almost exclusively the Jewish and the Christian Scriptures and individual experience as the source of their material. That of the future will recognize the widely extended domain of human knowledge which the later studies and discoveries of the nineteenth century have handed down, and it will draw upon this in the development of the new system. The results of the study of comparative religion, of physical sciences, of scientific criticism, of biology, of history, of anthropology, of psychology, of the universal religious intuitions, feelings and experiences—these and many more, together with the sacred writings of the Old and New Testaments, will be laid under tribute by the theology of to-morrow.

Not only will it tolerate or welcome truth from these various

channels when uninvited it presents itself, but it will go in search of it in every direction. Marcus Dods, in a recent sermon, said the sea-anemone was the emblem of the healthy Christian; it is the emblem likewise of healthy Christian theology. "Firmly fixed on the rock, it has many feelers floating around, to seize everything than can be used." All available knowledge must be seized and reconciled with faith, and this will be accomplished only when all the established facts furnished by nature, science and revelation shall have been reduced to a living unity in the ideal theological system that is to be.

Constructive and hospitable, the spirit of the Christian thought for which we are looking will also be devout. It is difficult to see how it could be otherwise. Time was when unbelief spoke in harsh and blatant tones of things sacred and divine. That time has gone. Now even unbelief is subdued in discussing things of God. It has learned a profound lesson from those who are solemn and devout in their quest of the truth. Surely the theological investigations of the future will be pursued in the same spirit. Realizing that it stands on holy ground, where sincerity, devotion and prayerfulness alone are appropriate, it will always seek the aid and guidance of the Holy Ghost in its work.

2. As to *method* the Christian theology under consideration, will be scientifically critical, historical rather than metaphysical, and biblical rather than speculative. At the beginning of a new century there is evidence on all sides that thoughtful men are unutterably weary of, and impatient with, unproved theories. As never before they are determined to be satisfied with nothing less than established fact. Under the application of the scientifically critical method many departments of human knowledge have been enlarged, and the mental horizon of men greatly widened. Why should it be otherwise as the result of the same method with theological science? The Christian thought of the future will apply the same rigorous principles in the employment of its materials. Accordingly it will be obliged to begin differently from what the traditional systems did, and proceed more cautiously, but must not the results thus to be obtained warrant

a new start and greater caution? It will recognize the wisdom of Browning's saying that,

"Who climbs keeps one foot firm on fact  
Ere hazarding the next step,"

and true to it, the theology that is to come will so far as it is possible advance only from the known to the unknown.

Hence the stress that will be placed by it upon the historical and biblical as over against the metaphysical and the speculative. The latter, metaphysical and speculative, will have their place also, and one more prominent no doubt than most of the Ritschlian school of thinkers would just now be likely to grant; but none the less, the preponderating emphasis will be justly placed upon the former, the historical and biblical. The great and undisputed historical facts of the New Testament, the unquestionable results achieved by biblical critics in the way of establishing the value and significance of certain books, as well as in the rational exegesis of particular texts from those books, will be taken account of in the erection of the temple of that science which for sublimity of content, is the superior of all.

3. As to the *principle* which will be dominant in the theology of the future the general trend of the best religious thinking of to-day can leave no one in doubt. Fifty years ago the Christological principle had no such practically unanimous support among those whose support is most desirable. It is true there is some variety of conception as to the nature of this principle to which Christ gives the name, some making it His person, some His consciousness, and some what is called the Christ idea. All however, are at one in affirming that Christ Himself is the distinctive element in the thought and life of Christianity. In His own word He is the "way"—the way apart from which "no man cometh unto the Father." In the word of one of His greatest interpreters—"of God, Christ is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption"—wisdom, that is, the divinely granted, humanly needed revelation which through His incarnate life, the Son of God has bestowed on us; righteousness, that is, reconciliation on our part toward

God, acceptance on God's part of us; sanctification, that is, the presence and power of the Holy Spirit; this three-fold gift of Christ thus culminating in the bliss of man's glorious redemption. As Christ according to His own word and that of Paul is the beginning and end of everything pertaining to Christian life and salvation, so for Christian thought He will more and more be recognized as its one unifying principle, its ever-living all-pervasive historical center. By making Him the "Mittlebegriff" as Nietzsche in his "System der Christlichen Lehre" puts it "our thoughts of man and God meet and are harmonized."

There is a certain school of philosophic thinkers who argue that nothing in Jesus Christ has any importance except His moral teaching. Emerson says Christendom has always dwelt "with noxious exaggeration," on the Person of Christ; but our coming theology appreciating more thoroughly than most of us as yet do, will dwell with still greater insistence upon the significance of His Person. In his last book Romanes says, "science is moving with all the force of a tidal wave toward faith in Jesus Christ as the world's Saviour." A power stronger than that of a "tidal wave" will bind theological thought in the future to the historical Christ "who will form its starting point, whose divine-human person will have guiding light and regulative force for the formation of all its doctrines, and who will form for it also the end and goal of revelation." And in ascribing such significance to the Incarnate Son of God future theology will not rest in, but rise from, the conception of his manhood and His office as the great ethical Teacher to that of His Saviourhood and God-head. It will not, with Schmiedel and Cheyne and their collaborators in the recently published volumes of the "Encyclopedia Biblica," declare that faith in the Incarnation and Resurrection must be given up, but by placing these facts in the very forefront of its system the tendency now observable in certain quarters of allowing Christ's Deity to remain obscured if not doubted or disbelieved, will be happily superseded.

4. As to *aim* the Christian theology of the future will be pre-eminently practical. And strange as it may at first appear, the

profoundest truths are often the most influential on human conduct and character. The doctrine of the Incarnation for instance, is surely the crowning mystery which no man can ever hope to fathom, yet what source of moral power or spiritual uplift is comparable to an intelligent apprehension of this great truth! When the Christian comes under its spell, when he is possessed by the thought that God Himself came down to this earth and lived as we are living, he takes a leap forward like the advance from infancy to manhood. To impel men to make such leaps is the practical purpose that will be sought after by the ideal theology in days to come. The system of thought centering in Him whose name is love, essays to make men loving and forgiving, to lead them to treat each other as brethren, to break up class distinctions, to hinder the outrageous disparities between wealth and poverty, and to destroy forever that luxurious selfishness living side by side with unpitied and unhelped distress, and which is such a reproach to present-day civilization. Spurning doctrinal dilettanteism this theology will aim to have the Christian creed to justify itself in Christian deed, in better lives, in ennobled communities, in righteous civil policy, in truer, juster political, economic, intellectual, social and religious conditions. Those that have confidence in the future of Christianity, should confidently await this Christian theology of the future.

## VIII.

### EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT.

#### THE BIBLE AND THE CHILD.

Bearing this title there is lying before us a small volume of essays, published several years ago by the Macmillan Company, New York. These essays were written by different authors, among whom are such well-known Christian scholars and thinkers as Dean Farrar, Professor Adeney, Dean Fremantle, Dr. Washington Gladden and Dr. Lyman Abbott. The general problem discussed in these essays is "the right way of presenting the Bible to the young in the light of the Higher Criticism." How can the results obtained by the modern critical and historical study of the Bible be best utilized in the instruction of the young in the family, the Bible class, and the Sunday-school? That certainly is a question which must present itself to thoughtful Christian teachers everywhere. In the present condition of religious thought it will not do to ignore the problem and treat it as if it did not exist.

That, indeed, has usually been the course recommended by the opponents of the Higher Criticism, who are convinced that the maintenance of the old views of the Bible is essential to the continuance of religion. The Higher Criticism has rejected some of the theories concerning the Bible which have been current for ages. It has come to the conclusion that the traditional theories as to the authorship, inspiration and infallibility of the Biblical books are not wholly tenable in the light of modern Christian scholarship. It is very sure, for instance, that Moses did not write the Pentateuch. In fact it holds that the first five, or rather six, books of the Bible are a very composite work, whose several parts date from different ages, some having originated as late as one thousand years after the time of Moses. Hence, while these books may have a high religious and moral value,



their historical and scientific value can not be estimated very highly. But the same is true also in regard to other books. The second part of the book of Isaiah was not written by the historical prophet bearing that name, but by some unknown, though highly endowed, prophet who lived late in the time of the captivity, when Cyrus, the Conqueror of Babylon and liberator of the Jews, had already entered upon the stage of Asiatic history. Hence the occurrence of his name in this book (44:28 and 45:1). which was once regarded as so emphatic a proof of prophetic foreknowledge, of course, no longer possesses that force. And the book of Daniel, according to the Higher Criticism, was not written in the time of the Babylonian captivity, but in the time of the Maccabees, and with the failure of the belief in its early origin goes also the belief in the fiery furnace and the lions' den. The book of Jonah, it is believed, is a novel with a religious tendency, much like our Sunday-school books. Esther, too, is a work of fiction, and Job is a religious drama in which the author speculates upon the origin of physical evil. And, then, there are said to be scattered throughout the Bible in great profusion discrepancies, which disprove its literal infallibility. When, for instance, it is said that the same king destroyed and did not destroy the high places, both statements cannot be true. Similar discrepancies exist in the New Testament. These facts have led theologians to assume a very free attitude towards some of the Biblical narratives. The miracles, in particular, if not wholly denied, have at least been regarded with suspicion by many of the representatives of the Higher Criticism, and all have exercised a critical function in reference to them, in which the story of the floating axe-head and of Elijah's fiery chariot, of course, does not receive as much credence as the account of the resurrection of Christ.

Such, then, are some of the results of the modern critical study of the Bible; and the question is what account should be made of these results in the religious instruction of the young. None whatever, would answer the traditionalists. These views are exceedingly dangerous to the Christian faith, and should by

all means be kept from the knowledge of children and of the common people. They might possibly do for theologians and for persons whose reason and conscience are of an uncommon character. But for children and for the common people they will never do at all. But what if these new views are true, their advocates may say; what is the use in ignoring the truth, and in continuing to teach views which are known to be untrue? Will not a true conception of the Bible in the end prove to be more valuable to religious life and faith than a false one, however it may at present jar upon our prejudices? What use can there be in the *notion* of an infallible Bible, when, after all, no such Bible exists? Moreover, is not the notion of infallibility inconsistent with all that we know of human life in every other sphere? We get along without it very well in science, philosophy, medicine, jurisprudence; why then not also in religion? But whether we would have it so or not, the great mass of Biblical scholars now tell us that at any rate there is no infallible Bible, and that the wisest thing for us to do is to adjust ourselves to this idea, and make the best use of the Bible as it is. To these representations, of course, the traditionalists may answer, as they usually do, that the critical views *have not been proven*. The higher criticism, they may hold, is only a passing phase of religious thought, which will have its day and pass away and be forgotten. They may promise themselves a *reaction* before long. In the way of illustration of the coming reaction reference is usually made to the history of the New Testament criticism, where it is easily shown that the views of Baur, Strauss and Renan are no longer held by any considerable number of Biblical scholars. As to the authorship of Biblical books, the Jewish rabbis and Christian fathers held the traditional views, and they are about as likely to have known the truth as any modern critics. And as to the supposed discrepancies in the Bible, they are not real. They would disappear if we knew everything. It is only our ignorance that causes discrepancies. The supposed difficulties with the miracles are due only to the current disbelief in the supernatural, which in turn has its ground in the evolu-

tionary philosophy. But against the evolutionary philosophy, too, there is going to be a reaction; and when it comes everything will go back to "the good old way," which was followed when theologians received their convictions either from an infallible church or an infallible confession.

But here writers like those of the volume of essays before us join issue with the traditionalists. They hold that the traditional views concerning the Bible, derived in the first place from the Jewish synagogue, have been finally discredited, and that there will never be any reaction in their favor. Some of the details of the current critical theories may, indeed, ultimately fail to be accepted. The critics are not in all respects agreed among themselves; although it should be added that there is no more difference among them than there is among the dogmaticians and commentators of the old school, in their efforts to reconcile and explain the difficulties of the Bible. There is, to say the least, not more difference manifest in the critical treatment of the miracle of Joshua than there is in the old orthodox treatment of it. But while some disagreements among the critics may have to be admitted, proving that they too are fallible men, yet it is believed that in the main their work will stand. There will, at least, be no return to the old traditional views generally of authorship, inspiration and infallibility of the Bible. We shall never again believe that Moses wrote the list of kings that reigned in the land of Edom "before there reigned any king over the children of Israel," or that David wrote the twenty-third psalm with its confident assurance of "dwelling in the house of God forever"; although this by no means necessarily implies that Moses and David wrote nothing at all. Among scholars there will be no reaction in favor of exploded theories. The appeal to the critical history of the New Testament is unfortunate for those who make it; for there has in modern times been no reaction in favor of the exegetical methods and theological views prevalent in the times before Baur. Baur and Strauss have, indeed, not been accepted as final authorities in Biblical science; but neither do we now accept as such the commentators who pre-

ceded them. If any proof of this statement is asked for, we have it in the fact that the New Testament is now treated according to the same critical principles as the Old. No New Testament scholar now entirely accepts the earlier view of the origin and relation of the four Gospels. In fine, then, the main results of the critical method will stand because they are true. The Bible is not a book of divine oracles let down directly from heaven, as the Koran was fabled to have been, in which every letter and syllable must be supposed to have a deep mysterious meaning. It is a book, or rather a collection of books, that originated in accordance with the ordinary psychological laws, and must be explained in harmony with these laws. Difficulties in the Bible, for instance, must be treated just as difficulties in any other book would be treated. Documents must be authenticated and statements verified according to the same rules that would be applied in the study of any other literature.

Thus, then, the main positions of the literary criticism of the Bible may, and in the light of the present scholarship must, be accepted as true. But if so, then what shall be made of this criticism in the teaching of the young? Would religious teachers be justified in ignoring it, and in going on teaching as if nothing had happened in the religious and theological world within the last three hundred and fifty years? This, indeed, is what is still generally done. Look at the teaching that is usually given in Sunday-schools. What is it that the children are taught, and how are they taught? They are taught the Bible; but it is done according to the mechanical, unspiritual method which is followed in the mathematical partition of its material into twice, or three times, seven equal parts, to be studied in an equal number of years. There is no discrimination as to the value of different parts. All parts are supposed to be equally inspired and equally divine, from the account of the discovery of the mules, or hot springs, in the wilderness, to Paul's praise of charity. Descriptions of Solomon's harem and of sacrificial and ritual ceremonies are studied with as much care and zeal as the utterances of the sermon on the mount. If in some of these parts it is difficult to

find any "lessons" that could benefit the minds of the young, why then they can be allegorized and thus made profitable. Thus we remember a series of Sunday-school lessons, published a number of years ago, in which it was seriously maintained that Samson was a type of Christ; and this idea was applied to various situations in the life of that young man of wasted opportunities and dissipated powers. In England, according to a statement of one of the writers of the book before us, it has been taught that Ahasuerus, of the book of Esther, represents Almighty God, Mordecai Jesus Christ, and Haman the devil. All this is supposed to be consistent with the utmost reverence for the Bible! Could anything that has ever been perpetrated in the name of the Higher Criticism be worse? And this kind of solemn trifling has been and is now carried on in quarters where any suggestion of a natural origin and meaning of Scripture would be received with the utmost horror. Thus Scripture is first turned into a kind of fetich, and then treated very much as the black man treats his fetich, when he tries to beat it into compliance with his desires.

Now against this whole method of teaching Scripture the writers of the essays before us, and many others with them, most earnestly protest. They maintain that, with all due allowance for its divine inspiration, which they by no means deny, the Bible is a book of real human composition, and should ever be treated as such. And they maintain, further, that it is a most serious mistake to exclude from the religious teaching of the young all the light of the best modern Biblical knowledge. The continued adherence, for instance, by the Sunday-school and pulpit, to the old translation of 1611, when there exists an incomparably better one in the Revised Version, and similar practices in other directions, it is claimed, will in the end do an immense amount of harm to the religious life and faith of the generation now growing up. This kind of obscurantism will not benefit but injure future generations of church members. It may, indeed, be a question whether the young should be taught everything that is, or may be, known about the Bible. Children

should be taught only what they are capable of understanding. Our Lord in teaching His disciples left some things unsaid, because they were not at the time able to bear them. That may be a valuable pedagogic hint for the Church now. But while it may not be necessary, or even possible, to teach the young all that theologians may now know about the Bible, it can never be right to teach them what is not true, and what in after life they will find out not to be true. Their faith and piety cannot be promoted in that way. In fact it cannot be right or proper to continue to teach theories which are under *strong suspicion* of being untrue. Thus, for example, it would not be right now to teach for literal history the first two chapters of the book of Genesis, and to insist that the world was created in just six days, and that the evolutionists are all a set of fools, or something worse. Young people now are going to school, and are becoming educated far beyond the measure of education received by former generations. They cannot long be deceived; and the attempt to deceive them can only have the most prejudicial effects. They are studying geography, and learn that the sun does not revolve around the earth, and that there is no mountain high enough from which literally all the kingdoms of the world could be seen. And they are studying geology, and learn that the earth with its inhabitants must have reached its present condition very slowly, and that there is an order of succession in animated nature that at least strongly resembles the process of evolution described by Darwin. And, once more, the young are being taught now that the world is governed by inflexible law, and that there are no occurrences in nature that have no causal connection with the unbroken chain of things. Even results produced in nature by the free will of man, which nature left to itself would not produce, imply a readjustment of the forces of nature according to its own inherent laws. We are all taught to believe that diseases may be healed by the application of medical science, but not by the mere pronouncement of magic formulas and incantations. But people who are thus taught are not natural believers in miracles. One difficulty with such people is that they have



never seen any miracles; and many doubtless feel in reference to them very much as Aeneas Silvius did when he went to Scotland to see the miracle of the barnacle geese growing on trees, and was there told that they grew, not in Scotland, but in the Orchades. "Then," says the churchman with an air of injured feeling, "*discimus miracula semper remotius fugere*"—we learned that the nearer we get to miracles, the farther off they always are. Now there may be more in the idea of miracles than the cold reason may be willing to grant; but while the young are in this temper of mind, there is certainly not much use in insisting before a Sunday-school class upon the physical reality of the miracle of Joshua, or upon the literal historicalness of the book of Jonah. The possible reality of miracles need not be denied in the teachings of the young. If their minds are not prejudiced, there may come a time when they may be able to see a true meaning in these miraculous stories of the Bible. They will at least be able to see that their presence in the Bible does not lower but rather heighten its religious value. But to insist upon the physical and historical reality of these stories indiscriminately now, we believe, would be very bad practice in the teaching of the young. Would it not be better to omit the study of those portions of scripture containing them until the mind of the young is more mature?

The worst thing would be to denounce as wicked men all those who hold the views now current in the best informed theological circles—to tell the young people that all the critical students of the Bible are bad men. This has been too much the practice of theologians in the past. Views that could not be refuted, could at least be denounced as rationalistic, heretical, atheistical, and perilous to Christian souls. No class of men understand that business better than the popes of Rome. But that kind of practice can not be followed with profit now. For the pulpit and the Sunday-school desk to paint in the blackest colors the representatives of the Higher Criticism, and others with whom they disagree, will defeat the object which it is intended to accomplish. If they do not know it now, the young people will come to know



some day, that the men who are painted in such dreadful colors, and who are said to be so awfully wicked and dangerous, are not such bad men after all. In fact they are as good, as earnest, as pious, as charitable, and as kind Christians, to say the least, as are their opponents. And hence this practice of denunciation, and this use of hard names must in the end prove hurtful in many ways. It must tend to undermine the confidence of the young in their teachers. But it must tend also directly to undermine the faith of those who are to be edified thereby. There is something immoral in this angry denunciation and misrepresentation, which must have an unfavorable effect upon the minds of the young, whether they hear it in the Sunday-school room, or read it in the columns of the religious paper. But there is another point of view in which the practice of denunciation must prove to be dangerous to the faith of Christians. When it is so confidently affirmed that the views denounced are inconsistent with faith in the Bible and in Christianity, it is always possible that some will take such denunciations in earnest; but finding, like Mivart, for instance, that they can not conscientiously let go the views denounced, they will let go the faith. Thus, for example, it has often been contended that the veracity and divinity of Christ are staked upon the literal historicity of the book of Jonah. If Jonah was not three days and three nights in the belly of an actual fish, and there composed a psalm or two, then, it has been said, it is all over with the claims of Jesus to be the Saviour of the world. In like manner the truthfulness of the Christian religion has been staked upon the outward reality, reported in several divergent accounts, of the appearance of Jesus to Paul on the way to Damascus. Now the danger of such pretensions is that some may take them in earnest, and accept the consequences. If belief in the story of Jonah as history, and not merely as a *story*, were really a necessary condition of faith in Christ, how many intelligent and pious men and women are there not, who would inevitably lose their faith in Christ? But this brings out a fundamentally wrong conception of the Christian religion. It supposes that Christianity consists of outward historical facts, dogmas, and

institutions formally reported and avouched in the Bible; and that, if these reports should be doubted, then there would be an end of the religion. Now, the cretainity of Christianity rests upon no such foundation. Christianity has its basis, not in outward signs and wonders, nor in philosophical ratiocination, but in the inward revelation and authentication of the spirit of God. "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." And hence they must entirely lose their labor, who imagine that faith can be established and the cause of Christianity served by misrepresenting or hiding the truth. Untruth can never be beneficial to any cause. There can never be anything gained by "lying for God." God needs no such help in the advancement of His kingdom.

From considerations like these it will appear, then, that it would be an unjustifiable policy on the part of the Church to continue to teach theories about the Bible which are either doubtful or known to be untenable, simply because it may be feared that the new might prove to be dangerous or revolutionary. Such fear would even imply a measure of scepticism in the Church that would be inconsistent with her Christian profession. One who is entirely sure of the truth of the Christian religion can have no fear of its being overthrown by any change of views in regard to the Biblical books. Luther certainly had no such fear. It may be admitted, however, that there is some danger in the new conception. It may be perverted and abused and may then, for a time at least, do harm. And hence care should be exercised in the presentation of it. The Bible should always be treated with the utmost reverence, as a precious gift of God to men, in order to guide them in the right conduct of their moral and religious life. But the fact that there may be danger in a doctrine does not make it untrue. Is there not danger in all truth? The doctrine of the fatherhood of God—that central doctrine of the Gospel—is true, but it may be abused. The doctrine of the freedom of the will is true, but it has its limitations and needs to be presented with care. But if the critical theory of the Bible has its perils, so also, it is claimed, has the old

theory. If the former might perhaps lead some people to underestimate the value of the Bible, the latter may drive many away from it altogether. The writers of the essays which have led to these reflections, point out and emphasize the perils of the traditional theory of verbal or plenary inspiration and literal infallibility. Hitherto the defenders of the traditional theory have had a monopoly of the alarm cry. They have raised the voice of warning whenever a new theory or a new apprehension of truth was proposed. It will imperil the people's faith, they said, and cause them to fall away from Christianity. But now the tables are turned. The writers of this volume, and others of like mind, say the danger is not in the new conception of the Bible and of Biblical truth, but rather in the old, which has lost its hold upon the modern mind and yet continues to be preached in the Churches. It is the old doctrine, then, that is responsible for the widespread defection from the Church, which we witness at the present time. If there were no such defection, if the old views about inspiration, infallibility, miracles and the like, were eagerly accepted by the common people, and if they proved themselves fruitful still in the shaping of men's religious lives, then it might perhaps not be expedient to disturb them. But the opposite is the case, and the reason for this, it is believed, may be found largely in the fact that the old doctrines and the old ways of thinking, which are still adhered to by the Churches as conditions of membership, do no longer approve themselves to the thoughtful mind of the present time. "We may well ask ourselves," says Dean Fremantle, "whether the cause of the alienation from the Christian faith is not often this, that we have bound up with religion during childhood a number of ideas which the adult finds to be untenable, but from which he finds it impossible to disentangle it." Is not this one of the causes that comparatively so few children of the Sunday-school become members of the Church? We believe, with Tertullian, that the human soul is, by nature, Christian, and if men are not Christians, the fault *may* be due to the hardness of their hearts, but it may also be due to the hardness of the theological system beneath

which Christianity has come to be hidden. The conclusion, then, seems to be irresistible that the young people of the Church should not be taught anything that will not authenticate itself to their minds when they shall have become adults.

So far as the particular method of teaching is concerned we believe, in the first place, that the young should be distinctly impressed with the fact that the single aim of the Bible is to teach religion and morality. It is not a book whose purpose it is to teach everything. When the Bible is appealed to in support of theories in history, science, geography and similar interests, there is a use made of it for which it is not intended; and then it fails, and shows itself unsatisfactory. The purpose of the first two chapters of Genesis, for instance, is not to teach geology, or anthropology, or psychology, but to create and foster correct religious sentiment—the thought and feeling springing from the fact that the one God worshiped in Israel is the creator, preserver and governor of heaven and earth, and of all things which are therein. In relation to that distinct purpose the Bible undoubtedly is infallible, whatever it may be in other relations. It never deceives in regard to the religious and moral sentiments which it inculcates; and anyone honestly and truly following it in this respect will never go wrong. If one were to come to it for a correct knowledge of ancient history or ethnology he might be left very much in the dark. The tenth chapter of Genesis, for instance, which *seems* to profess to give a complete account of the dispersion of mankind from a common center, does not account at all for the present existence of the most numerous races of men. But on the question of the spiritual and moral relation of men to God and to each other, even that chapter has something important to say. It says that God made all men, and that they are all brothers—a truth which even the Anglo-Saxon race has not yet thoroughly learned. But theology, too, in the strict sense, is not the proper object of the Bible; and it must, therefore, ever be a mistake to suppose that systems of theology can be obtained from the Bible by a mere colligation of texts selected solely with reference to their sound. And this limita-

tion of the Bible to religious and moral questions is a quality which even children can understand. Any boy knows that a work on grammar could not be used for studying arithmetic or geography. Every book he studies, he knows, is devoted to a distinct department of knowledge, and so also is the Bible.

But from the fact that the main purpose of the Bible is the promotion of religious sentiment, it will follow that the details of other matters which we find woven into its texture, are not an essential part of the revelation which it contains, and for the preservation of which it exists. They serve merely as stuff through which the religious ideal, or spirit, is manifested. This point may be made clear by an illustration taken from the realm of art. The essential content, the soul, of a work of art, whether poem, painting, or sculpture, is an æsthetic ideal, and the end for which it exists is æsthetic sentiment, or feeling, not history or science or anything else. Tennyson's treatment of the Arthurian legend, for example, has for its purpose the inculcation of æsthetic and moral sentiments; but for the realization of this purpose it is by no means necessary that the reader believe in the historical verity of all those legends. For the poet's purpose legends are as effective as actual facts would be. And so also it is in large measure with the Bible. Much of it is poetry. Indeed the English reader fails to get any adequate idea of the extent to which poetry prevails in the Bible, because the common version has so utterly obliterated its form, and not even the revised version has fully restored it. But the effect of poetry, as every one well knows, by no means depends upon the acceptance of all its statements as literal facts. Of a poem we may ask, is it true, and the answer may be yes or no, according to the sense in which the word truth is taken. There is poetic or æsthetic truth, and there is historical truth. A drama of Shakespeare contains and conveys poetic truth, but is not at all intended as a vehicle of historical truth. The same distinction must also be made in regard to the Bible; only here we must substitute the idea of religious and moral truth for poetical. The story of the fall in Genesis may not be literal history, and yet it may be true;

that is, it may convey a great spiritual and moral lesson. So the stories of the patriarchs may be legends, just like those which cluster around the name of King Arthur; but that does not make them untrue religiously or diminish their religious value. The lesson of obedience, of confidence, of trust in God, may be learned from the story of Abraham as effectively if that story be a legend, as it could be if the story were actual history. And the effect of these stories may be best enjoyed, not by analyzing them, but by simply receiving their impression as a whole; as the beauty of a flower is enjoyed, not by pulling it to pieces and seeing what it is made of but by gazing upon it in its living totality. When used in this way the Bible usually "finds us," to use the phrase of Coleridge; it meets and awakens the *christian* in the human soul and ministers to its spiritual development. And in this way children may be taught the Bible unto edification as well as adults. Cannot children be taught the difference between the *meaning* of a story and its *matter*? Boys and girls know very well that the stories in the Sunday-school books are not "true" stories, and yet they read them with eagerness and are benefited by their lessons.

But the Bible in its totality is not a book of fiction. Behind its stories, and behind its multitudinous ideals of spiritual life, there are living facts too—realities, which are of fundamental importance and value for the creation and nourishment of religious life and sentiment. These realities lie back in the living personalities with whose history the Bible is so largely concerned. God as a person is revealed in persons, not in things, or in mere vulgar, earthly events. The spiritual ideals, the quickening, saving, divine truths which the stories of the Bible may impress upon us, point back to living persons as the embodiments of ideals, and finally to God as the ultimate source of all ideals. Behind the stories of the prophets, there are the persons of the prophets; and it is in these persons, in their life and example, that we must look for the spiritual power of those stories by which we are so profoundly affected. The book of Jeremiah has the source of its spiritual power in the person of Jeremiah. So



behind the Gospels is the person of Jesus, in which are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; and we study the Gospels, not as if salvation were to be found in their separate details of events—miracles, discourses, etc.—but in order to know Jesus, and to come into vital touch with His person, for that only is the source and pattern of true moral and spiritual life for men. And so behind the Bible as a whole is God, who is the ultimate source and ground of all, and stands fully revealed in the person of Jesus Christ, of whom the Bible in its wholeness bears witness. But in order to penetrate to the ultimate source or sources from whence the Bible derives its power, study is necessary, even much profound critical study. Here it becomes necessary to dissect and analyze. To know what the prophets were, what Jesus Christ is, and what God is, we need the best critical knowledge of the Bible that we can get. Here the Higher Criticism especially shows its importance and value. The Higher Criticism has taught us to read the Bible in such way that we need no longer believe, for instance, that God ordered the extermination of the Canaanites, or inspired the authors of the imprecatory Psalms, or gave the command about killing witches; and the result certainly is an incomparably higher and truer knowledge of God than that which we possessed before. Thus the *critical* study of the Bible, too, must be of immense importance to the young; only the religious education of the young should rather end than begin with such critical study.

---

#### DR. C. CORT ON BAPTISM.

We admit Dr. Cort's article into this number of the REVIEW, although a strict application of our rules would have excluded it. In order to avoid all occasion of offensive personalities, we have made it a rule that the REVIEW shall not fight itself directly in its own pages. The REVIEW is open for the discussion of all proper subjects in an independent and impersonal way; but no writer may directly assail the views of another writer, as that would inevitably lead to controversy and embittered feeling. Dr.



Cort's article offends against this rule; containing, as it does, a direct assault upon the editor of the REVIEW as well as upon an editorial writer in the *Reformed Church Messenger*. It is pervaded, moreover, by a spirit which impresses us as being, to say the least, not amiable. Dr. Cort, it seems, has never learned the art of "speaking the truth in love." His purpose in this article seems to be rather to administer a castigation to the Christian Endeavor editor of the *Messenger* and to the editor of the REVIEW, than to set forth and commend the truth for its own sake. He would probably disclaim such a purpose, and we give him the benefit of such disclaimer in advance. But there is his article; let the reader examine it and judge of its tone and animus for himself.

But, now, as the article contains a direct attack upon some published statements of the editor of the REVIEW, a few words in the way of correction and explanation will, we trust, not be considered out of place. So far as the weight of the article itself is concerned it might well have been allowed to pass without notice. But it contains some errors and misconceptions which call for correction. For instance, Dr. Cort calls in question a statement of the Christian Endeavor editor of the *Messenger*, to the effect that "those who hold to what is called baptismal regeneration teach that a new life and character are imparted in baptism." He asks with an air of perfect assurance, "Who has ever taught that character was imparted by baptism as a regenerative act?" And then he continues: "Character is something to be acquired by an ethical process of Christian culture," etc. Now it is a pity that such assurance should not rest upon a good foundation; but if Dr. Cort will read the ninth canon of the Seventh Session of the Council of Trent, he will find the following language: "If any one saith that in the three sacraments, to wit, Baptism, Confirmation, and Order, there is not imprinted in the soul a *character*, that is, a certain spiritual and indelible sign, on account of which they can not be repeated: let him be anathema." We suppose the Council of Trent held to the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and it certainly does affirm that a

certain *indelible character* is impressed upon the soul in baptism. Indeed that conception has commonly prevailed in the Catholic Church from the time of Augustine down to the present. Baptism was believed to impress upon the soul the indelible stamp (character) of a Christian, which could never be lost. In fact, Dr. Cort's own conception of baptism as *imparting a new life*, if it means anything, comes to the same result. Of course, Dr. Cort is right when, using the word in a modern ethical sense, he says that "Character is something to be acquired by an ethical process." But the Christian Endeavor editor also is right when, using the word in an historical and theological sense, he says that believers in baptismal regeneration hold that baptism imparts a character; and it is strange that Dr. Cort should have overlooked so patent a fact.

Next, Dr. Cort is in error when he calls in question our statement as to the right of all infants to baptism. He quotes from an article of ours on "Infant Faith," in the July number of the REVIEW for 1899, the statement that, according to the views of certain English theologians, "baptism is not *creative* of a fact, but *declarative*. An infant is baptized not in order that it may become a member of Christ and a child of God, but because it is such, possessing a spiritual nature that is constituted in Christ, and has *not* been perverted by sin." "And then," he says, "we are told what our experience and observation for fifty years as well as all the Reformed rubrics for baptism flatly contradict, viz., that the Church has always baptized children brought to her fonts without asking any question in regard to their parentage." What we did say, as the reader may satisfy himself by turning to our former article, is that, for the reason that the efficacy of baptism is not conditioned upon Christian parentage, but upon the Christian constitution of humanity, "any child whatsoever for whose Christian training any one will make himself responsible, may be baptized"; and then we went on to say, in the language already quoted, that the practice of the Church has always been consistent with this principle. And these statements we now reaffirm, in spite of the "flat contradiction" of Dr. Cort's experi-

ence and of his knowledge of Reformed rubrics for baptism. The practice of baptizing the children of infidels and heathens, if there was some one to guarantee their Christian education, has prevailed from the earliest times down to the present. We quote a few sentences from Bingham. "Infants were of two sorts, either such as were born of Christian parents, or such as were born of heathens, but by some providential means became the possession or property, as I may call it, of the Christian church; neither of which sort were excluded from baptism, when sufficient sponsors could be provided for them." Again: "If it plainly appeared that the parents of infants, who by some providential means fell into the hands of Christians, were mere Jews or pagans; yet in such case baptism was not denied to the infants, because, they were now become the possession of Christians, who undertook to be their sponsors, and answer for their education." (Antiquities, Book XI., Chap. IV., §§ 5 and 18.) In agreement with this universal Christian practice the Constitution of the Reformed Church, Art. 121, provides that "persons who adopt orphans or other children" may have them baptized. And the rubrics of Reformed liturgies uniformly contain the same provision. What, then, becomes of the claim that the right of infants to baptism depends upon the fact of Christian parentage, agreeably to the provisions of the "Abrahamic covenant"? We hardly suppose that any one will contend that the fact of *adoption* will make infants fitter subjects for baptism than they are in virtue of their own human nature constituted in Christ; for to do so would be to turn adoption itself into a sort of a sacrament.

We are sorry to see that Dr. Cort has any trouble with the idea of humanity being constituted in Christ. "If this is not Pelagianism, what is it?" he asks. Well, let us assure him, then, that it is not Pelagianism. It is a conception which, though not unknown to some of the teachers of the early church, especially among the Greeks, is clearly beyond the horizon both of Pelagianism and of Augustinianism. Augustine taught that, in consequence of the fall, mankind is a mass of perdition, out of which some souls can be saved only by the coming into them of

some supernatural power going forth from Christ, and that this transmission of supernatural power must be mediated through the sacraments of the church, especially baptism. Pelagius taught that men are born without sin, as Adam was created; that they are not totally depraved, nor under condemnation; and that they are capable of working out their own destiny apart from Christ, although Christ's teaching and example are valuable helps to that effect. Neither according to Augustinianism nor according to Pelagianism do men as men stand in any constitutional or essential relation to Christ. This is a conception that transcends the views of both, and in which the one-sidedness of each ought to come to an end. We believe, moreover, that it is a Scriptural conception. We cannot argue this point now at length, but must content ourselves with presenting merely a few leading thoughts. There is, in the first place, the Johannean thought of the *life* which is in the incarnate Logos being the *light*, that is, source of the reason and conscience, of mankind, a light which though shining in the darkness of a world overspread by sin and error, has not been overpowered by the darkness. Does not that thought imply the idea of a permanent constitutional relation of all men to Christ? Then there is the Pauline thought of Christ as the *recapitulation* of all things, on which Irenaeus laid so much stress—a thought which is possible only if we suppose that humanity is one solidaric organism, whose unific principle is the living idea which at last takes flesh and appears in the person of the Christ. And how otherwise can we think of him as the one in whom men are chosen before the foundation of the world—an idea which, of course, we must extend to *all* men, unless we would fall into the error of a double decree of predestination? But in any case it implies an ideal relation to Christ of those who are saved, long before they are baptized. And, finally, there is Paul's grand conception of Christ as the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature, *in whom* all things were made, and consequently men, too, and *in whom* all things consist. Does not all this imply that somehow humanity is constituted in Christ, and that the

human soul, as Tertullian once said, is *naturally* Christian? This may be called mysticism; but we believe that it is in the New Testament, and that the men who emphasize this thought of Christ should not be so flippantly accused of doctrinal unsoundness by those who profess themselves to stand on Scriptural ground. And is not this a worthier and a larger conception of Christ than that which supposes His relation to individual souls to depend absolutely upon an external material institution, that is liable to accident or neglect, or to an imperfect or bungling performance?

But does this conception, then, turn baptism into a mere empty, formal ceremony? We say, No; baptism has its meaning and its use in the economy of the gospel. It declares to Christian parents that their children are God's children, and that they are responsible for their godly training. And it declares, or if the terms be preferred, it "signs and seals" to the children the fact that they are not their own, but belong to their faithful Saviour, Jesus Christ, to whom they owe their lives as living sacrifices of thanksgiving. It is, therefore, an important help to that living faith through which alone the forgiving and saving grace of God in Christ can be realized, and the soul enabled to be in *fact* what it is in *idea* through its constitutional union with Christ. This is in harmony with Calvin's definition of a sacrament, as "an outward sign, by which the Lord seals in our consciences the promises of His good will toward us, to support the weakness of our faith; and we on our part testify our piety towards Him, in His presence and that of angels, as well as before men." Institutes, IV., XIV., I. But how, then, can we say that the sacrament is *grace bearing*, as we have long been in the habit of doing? Well, certainly not in the sense of its being a sort of *conduit*, through which grace flows to us as water flows through a pipe. What is grace? It is God's love and good will toward men. But how can that be conveyed, or borne, to men through an external instrument or material transaction? Does God not love a human being until it is baptized? Is His love first conveyed to the infant soul through the "channel" of

baptism, somewhat as the electric fluid is conveyed through a conducting wire? We are afraid that that is really the notion which some good people have in their minds, when they talk of baptism as "imparting a new life and character"; but that is a Catholic and not a Protestant idea, and we do not at all believe that it is Scriptural. Baptism is not the cause of God's love; but on the contrary, God's love is the cause of baptism. The infant is not baptized that God *may* love it, but because he *has* loved it and *does* love it. But how does that differ from saying that an infant is not baptized that it may become a child of God, but because it is such? This, however, does not mean that it is by nature a member of the Church; and still less that it is by nature a member of the kingdom of God; for in order to membership in the kingdom of God there is required a moral process, of which the Church is the outward condition, through which the *essential* Christian becomes an *actual* Christian.

Dr. Cort appeals, in behalf of the theory that a new life is imparted in baptism, to the analogy of naturalization in the order of our civil life. Is there nothing in naturalization, which changes a foreigner into an American citizen? We answer, Certainly there is; but think of this a little further. Does naturalization work any change in the foreigner's nature? Why can a foreigner be naturalized? Only because he is a man of our own race, and possesses a human nature like our own. If he were a wild animal, or even a wild man, naturalization would not make an American citizen of him. Naturalization recognizes in him the nature of a citizen, and declares this fact to the community of citizens. It says, This man is your fellow citizen, and you are to recognize and treat him as such. So baptism recognizes in the person baptized the nature of a Christian, and the fact of his being an object of God's love, and authoritatively declares this recognition to the person himself and to the Christian community. And there we see the essential benefit of baptism: it helps the person baptized to realize the love of God and his own state of grace. God's love is eternal and unchangeable, and has for its object the soul created in the eternal Christ unto His own image. But the love of God is



really saving and beautifying only when it is apprehended and realized in the consciousness of its object. A child can be happy in a parent's love only when it realizes that love in its own mind. No child could be happy in a love of which it knows nothing. Nor could such unknown love produce any moral effects in its object. God's love can bring blessing and moral energy only to the soul in which it is realized through faith. And if we say that this faith is wrought through the gospel, including the sacraments as confirmatory signs and seals, do we then make the sacraments of none effect, or encourage men to neglect and despise them? Those who think so come to their conclusion only through their own inference-factory, and not through any statement of ours. Our concern is not to lessen people's respect for the sacraments by any means, but rather, by showing their true nature, to make continued respect for them possible in this age of universal intelligence. And we are, therefore, concerned to get rid of that *opus operatum* theory which teaches that the sacraments impart grace in consequence of their mere performance, which we hold to be unscriptural, unreasonable, and unethical, and certain to be rejected by the age in which we live. And we are not freed from the *opus operatum* theory by saying that we suppose the effect of the sacrament to be accomplished, not by the outward operation as its immediate cause, but by the Holy Ghost who waits on this operation. If the activity of the Holy Ghost be so tied to the outward operation, that the latter must necessarily start the former, we have the essence of the *opus operatum* theory still. The Roman Catholic believes nothing more than that.

But we do not propose at this time to discuss the subject any farther. From what we have said we hope that even Dr. Cort, with whom we will have, and can have, no controversy, may be able to see that truth and reason are not so entirely on his side, and that the question is not so entirely settled, as he supposes. There have been changes in theology since the early sixties. And in some respects these changes have been in the way of return to the position of the fathers of the Reformation. This we believe to be especially true in regard to the doctrine of the



sacraments. We are convinced that the position maintained in this paper comes vastly nearer to the teaching of the Heidelberg Catechism than does that which regards baptism as the "impartation of a new life and character." We may not now use the precise language of the theologians of three hundred years ago. There has been movement and progress in theology since those theologians fell asleep, and even since our immediate fathers and teachers fell asleep. Now we want to be true to the fathers and to the sons, to the past and to the present. And we are true to the memory of the fathers, not by repeating their theological formulas, but by adjusting their spirit and genius to the intellectual condition of the world at the present time. Some denominations, indeed, think that this cannot be done. That is the opinion of Rome. And it seems also to be the opinion of many Lutherans and Presbyterians. The Lutheran spirit, it is believed, must necessarily repel all truths and all forms of teaching upon which Martin Luther has not, or is not believed to have set, the seal of his approbation. The Reformed spirit, we believe, attracts to itself all truths from all quarters. It readily accepts the results of the higher criticism, as well as the results of the scientific, historical and ethical inquiries of modern times, and adjusts itself to these results without at all losing its own identity. It is in this way only that "the confessional system of doctrine" can be maintained in the intellectual and religious life of the modern world. A system that cannot thus adjust itself has no chance of surviving in its modern environment. And to be of service, in however small a degree it may be, to our Reformed system in this process of readjustment, is our aim and purpose. We can, therefore, not state doctrines now just as they were stated in the past, and we would not if we could; and yet we believe that the heart of the old system should be in the body of the new formulations of doctrine. It is only in this way that doctrinal systems can always be kept fresh and vital, and be a perpetual blessing to the church.

But if it is the fate of Christian doctrines to be restated from time to time in a manner consonant to the spirit and thought of

an age, it will follow that there must always be more or less theological discussion. Such discussion should, therefore, be subjected to no restrictions, except such as are imposed by the spirit of gentlemanly courtesy and Christian charity. And it is to serve as an organ for such discussion that this REVIEW has been maintained by the Reformed Church for more than half a century. Its pages are open for the free discussion of all current theological as well as moral questions. They are not closed to articles on the Church, the ministry, the liturgy, the sacraments and similar subjects; although the world is more accustomed just now to the discussion of more practical and more ethical themes. It is true that years ago these ecclesiastical subjects were discussed in a manner which alienated brethren and caused strife and division in the Church. That was a mistake. It was in the time of the Puyseite struggle in England, whose effects were felt elsewhere in the theological world. But the fact that mistakes were made then, is no reason why these subjects should not be open for rediscussion now. Only let the discussion be conducted in a spirit of Christian charity and forbearance. Let us be done with this thing of charging rationalism, Pelagianism, Socinianism and other bad *isms*, upon views which we may believe to be different from our own. And let there be no more charges of dishonesty, bad faith, violation of ordination vows and similar crimes. Let it be taken for granted that theological thinkers and teachers in the Reformed Church are honest men, who investigate and study, not for the purpose of inoculating the Church with error, but for the purpose of promoting the understanding of the truth. Dr. Harbaugh, whom we like to quote, too, once remarked in a meeting of Synod, when some one had charged some one else with dishonesty, that he did not believe there were any rascals on the floor of Synod, but if any one chose to differ with him, he should look into a glass and he might see the face of a rascal. Let us, then, by all means have theological discussion, for that is a condition of progress in a religious community, but let our discussions be free from the bitterness of controversy. We can scarcely conceive of those having any vocation

for theological discussion, who can only approach a subject in connection with some personality, for certainly they can do the cause of truth no good. We would say once more that the pages of the REVIEW are open for articles on baptism and other theological subjects, in which the writers may be perfectly free to express their own views, provided only they will abstain from offensive personalities and contribute something of interest to the readers of the REVIEW and something that shall tend to advance the progress of theological thought.

---

#### THE PLACE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE IN THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

A distinction may be made between sociology and the social sciences, like civics, economics, and social ethics. But *sociology* as the science of society in general, or the philosophy of social well-being may be taken as comprehending the whole class of social studies. It is the general term under which civics, economics and social ethics are comprehended as particulars, although it contains matter also which is not embraced in any one of its separate branches.

What is the place of these social studies in a theological seminary? The decision of this question will depend upon the general purpose for which a theological seminary exists. If that purpose be merely the cultivation of theological science as such, then evidently there can be no room for the cultivation of sociological science in a seminary. But a theological seminary exists for the larger purpose of preparing men for the Christian ministry. The study of theology itself looks to this end. The theological student does not study theology merely for the satisfaction of his curiosity, or for his own gratification, as he might study some department of natural science, or some branch of philosophy; on the contrary, he studies theology with a view to the proper discharge of the functions of the Christian ministry through which the church is to be extended and edified. Can social science, then, contribute anything valuable to a minister's

education? Can sociological knowledge be helpful to him in the discharge of ministerial duties? Now in the degree that this is the case should the social sciences receive attention in a theological seminary.

It may be said, indeed, in the first place, that the study of social science will be valuable as a mere mental drill. Though not an *exact* science in the sense in which chemistry and astronomy are such, it is nevertheless a science that taxes the best powers of the human mind. Human society is a very complex thing, in which fixed laws and voluntary action constantly interpenetrate and modify one another, and the rational study of which, therefore, must be beset with very peculiar difficulties. But such study must, like mathematics, the physical sciences, and philosophy, have a very high disciplinary value. This, however, is merely a *formal* value. Can social science have any *material* value for the Christian ministry? Besides the mental discipline which results from the study of it, can the knowledge thus acquired be of any material benefit to the minister in the performance of his duties? This question, we think, should be answered in the affirmative for the following among other reasons:

*First*, because it contributes largely to that knowledge of human nature and human life which a minister needs in order to a successful presentation of the gospel. The preaching of the gospel is not merely the proclamation of the truths of the gospel in a haphazard way, but the application of these truths to the present condition and needs of men. Hence the preacher needs to know man as well as theology. As a farmer, in order to successful farming, needs to know soils as well as seeds, so a successful minister must know, not only the word of God, but also man—man in society, the social man.

*Secondly*, sociological knowledge will be helpful to the minister because, agreeably to the general scope of Christianity, he is called to labor for the amelioration of human life and society; which he can do only in the measure that he understands the laws and principles of the organization and working of society. Christianity looks not merely to the salvation of the soul in a

future life. It looks to the betterment of the life that is now and here. Any careful reader of the Bible will have noticed how little attention it devotes to the future, and how much to the present life. This present life can not be insignificant in the general plan of human existence. Even if it be regarded merely as a preparation for a future life, it must still be of vast importance. And an order of society that shall present a favorable environment for human development must be a better condition for preparation for the future than a different order of society would be. This fact is generally recognized now in our theories of missions. We are anxious that the heathen should be christianized, not because we suppose them to be dropping into hell at the rate of sixty a minute, but because Christianity will make their life better, and purer, and happier in this world.

But Christianity proposes also to make the life of Christian nations better, and purer, and happier than it is now. It is a moral and social force for the elevation of the nations, which has by no means yet accomplished its full purpose; and the Christian minister is intended to be an organ for the exercise of this world-uplifting power. The question may be asked, however, whether the end proposed may not be accomplished by the mere presentation of the gospel as the power for the salvation of individual souls. When men and women have been converted, will not society come right of itself? What can the minister do to make it right? Can he be expected to become a teacher of sociology, and employ his mind about questions of wages, of rent, of taxation, and the like? Our answer is that it may often become desirable, if not necessary, that the minister should have something positive to teach touching the well-being of society. The inculcation of general principles may not always be enough. Instance the case of Nathan before David. It becomes necessary for the preacher sometimes to say, *Thou art the man*. The command, *thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself*, sometimes needs more explicit explanation; as it did once at least in the history of Christ. But in order to give such explanation a good deal of ethical and especially sociological knowledge is required. This,

however, does not mean that the minister must in general be a professor of sociology, and that he should turn his pulpit into a stage for the habitual discussion of current sociological questions.

*Thirdly*, and finally, sociological knowledge will be helpful to the minister at the present time, because present social conditions are of such character as largely to hinder the success of the gospel. Among these conditions are the intense struggle for existence, the incessant conflict between capital and labor, and the estrangement of the masses, especially of laboring men, from the church. The great majority of working men do not care for the church, because they think the church does not care for them. The church, like the law, they say, is always on the side of capital against labor. This may not be true in the broad sense in which it is so often affirmed. But if the church had always plainly manifested the spirit of Christ, there would have been no occasion for the suspicion that she is partial to kid gloves and money bags. But the fact is that ministers, especially of rich and fashionable congregations, have often apologized for the wrongs of mammon; and this perhaps not so much because they were so exceedingly perverse, as because they were entirely ignorant of how "the other half" lives. A little wider knowledge of men and society would have given them larger and more generous sympathies. It has been said that in times of labor war the ministers and lawyers are generally on the side of capital. The fact has been noted that, at the time of the Homestead troubles, some years ago, when a private corporation made formal war upon residents of Pennsylvania, introducing for that purpose armed troops (Pinkertons) from another state, there was but one minister, a Methodist, in all that region who took the part of the laborers. The most charitable explanation of such facts is that so many ministers are without any knowledge of social and economic conditions. But such facts greatly injure the church. More knowledge of social and political conditions would presumably lead to different conduct. Some study of sociological science would at least teach ministers when to be silent, if they have nothing wise or profitable to say.



## IX.

### NOTICES OF NEW BOOKS.

[Any books noticed in this REVIEW can be obtained, at the lowest prices, of the *Reformed Church Publication Board*, 1306 Arch St., Philadelphia, Pa.]

**THE THEOLOGY OF ALBRECHT RITSCHL.** By Albert Temple Swing, A. M., Professor of Church History in Oberlin Theological Seminary, together with *INSTRUCTION IN THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION*, by Albrecht Ritschl, Translated by Permission from the Fourth German Edition, by Alice Mead Swing, A. B. Pages xiv + 296. Longman's, Green & Co., 91 and 93 Fifth Ave., New York, 1901. Price, \$1.40, net.

Next to Schleiermacher no theologian of the present century has attracted so much attention and so profoundly impressed theological thought, especially in Germany, as Albrecht Ritschl. In the proper sense of the term he has founded no school of theology, and yet at the present day the great majority of living, active theologians in Germany are following more or less closely in the line of his thought. The great *mediation school* which once promised so much and whose best works are still worth studying, has entirely disappeared before the rising sun of Ritschlianism. And the few confessional theologians, especially of the Lutheran persuasion, who are still left, like Luthardt, are looking, sadly no doubt, towards the end of their vocation. In England also, as well as in America, some of Ritschl's leading thoughts have been gaining currency, through the influence of many students who have of late years visited the German universities. Hence it can not but be desirable to have at hand, in convenient form, a work containing correct information concerning the true nature and tendency of Ritschl's theology. There have not been wanting offers of such works. But these have generally been so divergent in their representations and some of them so manifestly unfair that they could not be received with a very high degree of confidence. Stählin's work on *Kant, Lotze and Ritschl*, translated by Simon, is hostile throughout, and is a true product of German *consequenzmacherei*. Professor Orr, who in his *Christian View of God and the World*, is constantly criticising Ritschl, has evidently not understood him. Others have followed in the wake of Professor Orr. Hence, as a result, many of the common second-hand opinions of Ritschlianism current in this country have been, in the language of Professor Swing, "as ridiculously hostile as they have been absurdly unfounded."

Professor Swing's work differs from most of the works preceding it in that it rests upon thorough knowledge of the subject with which it deals, and proceeds from a mind in sympathy with the various positions discussed. Professor Swing does not believe that Ritschl is a dangerous theological teacher, or that Ritschlianism is subversive of evangelical Christianity. He



quotes approvingly a letter addressed by Dr. Philip Schaff to Dr. Mann on the occasion of Ritschl's death, which occurred in 1889. The letter is as follows: "So Ritschl is dead; but not his school. I do not have so unfavorable an opinion of it as you have. It is a reaction against the Hegelian much-knowledge and all-knowledge. It once more leads away from the realm of speculation and up to the sources of revelation, and from confessional ecclesiasticism to biblical Christianity. At any rate, Ritschl has *started a movement* in theology." In harmony with this opinion of Dr. Schaff's Professor Swing says, "But I have a deep interest in Ritschl also for his own sake, because his historical method is more suggestive than that of any other modern writer on the subject of doctrine. He has introduced a method of analysis which is revolutionizing historical and doctrinal study." If in relation to Professor Swing's attitude to his subject we were to make any criticism, we should say that he manifests perhaps slightly too much anxiety to establish his orthodoxy. Orthodox in a sense Ritschl doubtless is, but not in the sense of the prevailing confessionalism, whether Lutheran, Calvinistic or Arminian. He does, however, upon occasions appeal to the Lutheran confessions in support of his positions.

Professor Swing's material in this volume is arranged in six chapters. The first chapter contains a general introduction, in which, besides a biographical outline, we find a general discussion of Ritschl's aim and method. His aim is said to have been to "make divine revelation positively normative for everything in Christian theology." His method is described as *historical, analytical, constructive and practical*. The following sentence shows the extent of Ritschl's practical tendency: "In dogmatics," he says, "one should take up nothing that cannot be used in preaching and in the intercourse of Christians with one another." The second chapter is entitled: *Presuppositions for an Understanding of Ritschl from the History of Doctrine*, and here it is shown that the theologians who exercised most influence upon the mind of Ritschl were Bernard, Luther, Calvin and Schleiermacher. Attention is called to the fact that neither Augustine nor Aquinas were among the theologians from whom Ritschl received the most impulse. The third chapter deals with the *Presuppositions for an Understanding of Ritschl from Philosophy*. Here, of course, comes under consideration Ritschl's *theory of knowledge*. To this the most serious objection has usually been made. He has often been represented as a subjective idealist, for whom God, sin and redemption are only subjective phenomena. But nothing could be wider off the mark than this representation. Ritschl, in his theory of knowledge, it is generally conceded, follows Lotze; but Lotze is no subjective idealist. There are essentially three theories possible as to the relation of the knowing mind to its object in knowledge. There is first the Platonic theory, which

holds that, while the thing known works upon the mind through its changing characteristics, yet itself remains forever at rest behind its phenomena, and must be known apart from them. Then there is, secondly, the Kantian theory, that the *thing in itself* cannot be known at all, but only its phenomena. And, finally, there is the Lotzian theory, that things are known in their phenomena; "with which theory," says Ritschl, "I agree." Ritschl's theory of knowledge determines his relation to metaphysics in theology. On this subject Professor Swing quotes from Ritschl the following sentences: "It is an inconsiderate and incredible assertion that I exclude all metaphysics from theology. \* \* \* I follow a theory of knowledge which, in the determination of the objects of knowledge, is governed by a conception of the things, and consequently it is metaphysical." Hence the charge so frequently made that Ritschl in his theological thinking discards reality and rests merely upon phenomena, is wholly unfounded.

The general subject of Chapter IV. of the book under notice, is "Ritschl's Conception of Particular Christian Doctrines." The first subject treated in this chapter is the Bible, which, according to Ritschl, is the only source of positive Christian theology. To serve as such, however, the Bible must be used critically, for not everything in the Bible may be turned into permanent Biblical truth. In such use of the Bible there can be no question of infallibility—to demand infallibility could only lead to the Roman Catholic Church. The next subject discussed is that of *the person of Christ*. The divine sonship of Jesus, according to Ritschl, is revealed in the mutual knowledge of the Father and the Son, but to explain this mystery by formulas of any sort is impossible. On the subject of the Holy Spirit we are told that Ritschl's theory of knowledge does not deny, but most strongly affirm its reality. In the section on *the work of Christ in behalf of His community* it is shown that, according to Ritschl, Christ's mediatorial work has value for God as well as for men, but that the vicarious punishment doctrine of the atonement is, of course, rejected. In Chapter V. we have a presentation first of Ritschl's doctrine of *sin and guilt*, and secondly of *the forgiveness of sins*. On these subjects Ritschl has written his largest work entitled *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*. Professor Swing devotes twenty pages to the elucidation of their meaning, which it would be futile to attempt to reproduce in a few sentences. The *wrath of God* forms the subject of the last section of this chapter. In the last chapter the author sets forth, first, Ritschl's relation to *mysticism* and *pietism*. Here we are told that "for Ritschl the line of thought of the *unio mystica* is outside the field of churchly teaching." Next follows a summary and general estimate of Ritschl's teaching. Here we quote a few sentences relating to Ritschl's conception and use of the Bible. "Every school which treats the Bible as divine means, and not as *à priori* dogmatic authority, will naturally see the

writings from the side of their human conditions. The times and the men will always be looked upon in a historical way: truths will always be thought of as first seen and experienced in the lives of real men and women, and not primarily as of an oracular nature, as if slipped into the world in a miraculous manner. We have no such Bible in the thought of Ritschl. The Bible is to be humanly interpreted, but it is of no private interpretation. No one has the secret of it, and God leaves us to find its meaning by just that common law of probabilities which must rule everywhere. And it is only the meaning of the Bible which makes it divine," pp. 155-6.

The last one hundred and fifteen pages of the volume before us are devoted to a translation of Ritschl's treatise entitled, *Instruction in the Christian Religion*. This is, in fact, "a handbook of biblical theology, biblical ethics, and divine worship, in which Ritschl has given a practical illustration of what he believes to be the true method of approach in biblical teaching." This instruction is arranged in four parts, the first part containing *the doctrine of the kingdom of God*, the second part *the doctrine of reconciliation through Christ*, the third part *the doctrine of the Christian life*, and the fourth part *the doctrine of Christian worship*. This small treatise contains, in his own language, most of Ritschl's peculiar theological views, especially in their bearing upon the religious and moral life of men. Those who desire to become fairly well acquainted with Ritschlianism, and yet have not the time and ability to read the work of three volumes on *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung* should not fail to read this small treatise. The translation is comparatively smooth and reads well, and, as far as we are able to judge, is true to the original. And this is saying a good deal for a translation of a writer whose language is so uncouth and rugged as that of Ritschl. It is due to this quality of Ritschl's style, no doubt, that the translation of the quotations, which are numerous in the first part of this volume, are not always as clear and perspicuous as could be desired. They can generally be understood by the intelligent reader, but in order to this there is frequently required more than an ordinary effort. In fact the whole work is one for students, who are willing to devote time and energy to the mastering of the subject presented to their attention. Of that subject, however, no intelligent minister can afford to be ignorant. To have a right to let one's voice be heard now in the world of theological discussion, one may not be ignorant of the theology of Albrecht Ritschl. Besides, that theology is penetrating into English and American circles of thought, and it will become necessary before long to reckon with it in earnest. And we are glad that we can commend the volume here noticed as an admirable introduction to the theology of Ritschlianism. The complete index which the volume contains enhances very much its value to the student.

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY NEW TESTAMENT, a Translation into Modern English, made from the Original Greek. In Three Parts.—Part I. *The Five Historical Books*.—Part II. *Paul's Letters to the Churches*. Pages (two parts), 380. Fleming H. Revell Company, New York, Chicago, and Toronto, 1901. Price, per part, 50 cents.

The work here noticed, of which *two parts* have thus far appeared, in separate volumes, contains a new translation of the New Testament, made by about twenty different persons, whose names are for the present withheld from the public. We are assured, however, that they belong to various sections of the Christian Church, and may therefore be certain that their translation is free from any denominational or partisan bias. Should there be any doubt of this, however, a careful examination of their work would speedily remove it, and would besides also produce a conviction of their thorough competency for the task which they have undertaken. Only thorough scholars and linguists who are perfectly familiar with the Greek and English languages, are capable of producing an English translation of the New Testament that shall be truly valuable to English-speaking Christians. That the collaborators in the work before us, though they represent no formal ecclesiastical authority, are persons possessing this qualification, there can be no doubt after even a slight examination of the translation contained in these two volumes.

This translation differs from other translations in several important respects. In the first place, it is a *new translation*, and not merely a revision of an older translation. Even the Revised Version of 1881, as its name implies, is only a revision of the Authorized Version made in 1611, which latter is based upon Tyndale's version of 1534, and this last again upon Wycliffe's of about 1380. While, of course, the authors of this twentieth century translation must have studied all previous translations as a qualification for their work, yet their translation is their own. In the second place, this translation is made from the best Greek text of the present time, namely, that of Westcott and Hort. Wycliffe's translation, which served as the foundation of all subsequent translations, was not made from any Greek text at all, but from the Latin Vulgata. The Authorized Version was corrected by the use of the *Textus Receptus*. The Twentieth Century Translation is made directly from the best Greek text now extant. But, finally this Twentieth Century Translation is a translation into *twentieth century English*. It is the English language as it is written and spoken at the present time that we read in this Twentieth Century New Testament. The rule followed in the revision of 1881 was "to introduce as few alterations as possible in the text of the Authorized Version consistently with faithfulness." Only when the language of the older version had become obsolete and unintelligible were new words admitted. The result is the preservation of that "archaic flavor" of the Authorized

Version which is such a "delight to cultivated aesthetic taste," but which can hardly be said to add much to a better understanding of the New Testament. This archaic flavor is, of course, absent from this Twentieth Century New Testament; but instead of it we have the language of the present day, as it is spoken, for instance, in the pulpit and read in books of literature and theology.

This use of the language of the present day, of course, adds much to the intelligibility of the New Testament. Such a translation must in the nature of the case be something of a commentary. Indeed any translation must in some measure possess that character. Before one can be ready to begin the work of translation, he must have thoroughly mastered the meaning of his author—he must have thought his author's thought first in the language of that author. Then the work of translation will consist in reproducing that thought in modern English, or German, as the case may be. The best translation of St. Paul's letters, for instance, will be in such language as St. Paul himself would use if he were here now and speaking in English on the great themes which engaged his mind. He would abandon the idioms of Hellenistic Greek and in their place use those of the English language of the present day. Such phrases as "according to the flesh," "in the spirit," "in Christ," with which few English readers now connect any distinct thought, would give way to expressions that would at once be intelligible to every one. And this is the kind of translation which this Twentieth Century New Testament aims to furnish. It is not a *paraphrase* that is to be given, but a *translation* in such language as the author himself would most likely use if he were writing English in this first year of the nineteenth century. The writers of the New Testament did not write in the noble Greek of Plato and Xenophon, which flourished some five or six hundred years before their time. They wrote in that Hellenistic Greek which was spoken in the Jewish quarters of Alexandria, Antioch and other places in their day. And if they were now here and writing for the use of English Christians, the probability is that they would not be anxious to adopt the "noble English undefiled" of three or four hundred years ago, but that which is now in common use. Why should not translators, especially of the Bible, follow the same principle? Those of the Twentieth Century New Testament have endeavored to do so and the Christian world will judge of the result.

In order to enable our readers to form an opinion of that result we here give some specimens of it, taken at random. Here is the passage concerning the children, Mark 10: 14: "'Let the children come to me,' he said, 'do not hinder them; for the kingdom of God belongs to the childlike. Believe me, unless a man receives the kingdom of God like a child, he will not even enter it.'" The following bears upon the origin and divinity of Christ, Rom. 1: 3,

4; "who as regards his earthly parentage (R. V. according to the flesh), was descended from David, but as regards the Spirit of holiness which was in him, was miraculously proved to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead." The following passage, Rom. 3: 20-26, which has perplexed commentators, will give one a good idea of the character of this new translation: "*For no human being will stand right with God as the result of actions done in obedience to Law; for through Law there comes a clear conception of sin. But now quite apart from Law, there stands revealed a righteousness which comes from God, and to which the Law and the Prophets bear witness. It is a righteousness which comes from God through faith in Jesus Christ, and is for all, without distinction, who believe in him. For all have sinned, and all fall short of God's glorious ideal, but, in his mercy, are being set right with him through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. For God placed him before the world, to be, by his sacrifice of himself, a means of reconciliation through faith in him. God did this, in order to prove his righteousness, and because in his forbearance he had passed over the sins men had previously committed; God did this, I repeat, as a proof, at the present time, of his own righteousness, in order that he might be righteous, and make those who have faith in Jesus Christ stand right with himself.*" The following translations may be compared with those in the Revised Version: Matt. 3: 11, "I for my part baptize you in water to teach repentance"; Matt. 5: 20, "Unless indeed your religion is superior to that of the Pharisees and Rabbin"; Matt. 6: 1, "Take care not to fulfil your religious duties in public with a view to be seen by others"; 2 Cor. 10: 2, "that we are influenced in our conduct by earthly motives" (R. V. "walk according to the flesh"); Eph. 6: 1, "Children obey your parents as Christian children should" (R. V. "in the Lord"). The phrases "in the Lord," "in Christ," etc., are generally rendered in "union with," etc.

The few examples now presented will be sufficient to enable the reader to form an idea of what this twentieth century translation is like. That it is a more successful interpretation of the New Testament to the ordinary modern mind than the Revised Version of 1881 we think will not be denied by any who have given it even a cursory examination. It may be a question, however, whether the idea of modernization has not been carried to excess, and whether changes have not been introduced where they were not necessary. For instance, for the word "gospel" there has been substituted "Good News," for "parable" "story," for "Word" "message," for "justification" "standing right with God." These and other innovations are, to our mind at least, of doubtful propriety. *Gospel, parable, justification* are, we think, good twentieth century words and should not have been disturbed. Of course, this is a matter of opinion and to some extent



of taste. Still we believe that in a translation of the New Testament changes should be made only when they are required to make the sense more plain to the modern mind. It is commonly acknowledged now that the revisers of 1881 erred in this respect. They made changes often when they were not required by the sense and did not affect the sense. For example, they made changes in the tenses of verbs which do not help the sense, but make sentences sound harsh to an English ear. This in connection with the fact that they frequently failed to make changes where they should have been made, often contenting themselves with putting the better renderings in the margin, has doubtless helped to make the Revised Version a comparative failure. It will never come into general use. But in its present form it may be doubtful whether the twentieth century translation will meet with better success. In fact, we suppose that this is not expected. The present edition, it is distinctly stated, is intended to be merely a tentative one; and we presume those who have the matter in hand will not hesitate to make any advisable changes in the future.

Some changes have been made in the arrangement of books in this work. These have some reference to the order of their composition as now accepted; but this reference is not allowed to be decisive in all cases. The *first part* contains the historical books, that is, the Gospels and the Acts, but in the following order: Mark, Matthew, Luke, John, Acts. The *second part* contains the letters of St. Paul addressed to the churches, arranged in three groups. The first group embraces the letters to the Thesalonians; the second group, those to the Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians; and the third group, those to the Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians. Each book is prefaced with a short introduction, giving information as to time and place of composition, etc. The *third part*, which will contain the General and Pastoral Epistles, together with the Epistle to Hebrews and the Apocalypse, will be eagerly awaited by all New Testament students. For to all such this Twentieth Century New Testament will prove itself to be an indispensable help.

**AUTHORITATIVE CHRISTIANITY.** *The Six Synods of the Undivided Church.* Translated by James Chrystal, M. A. Volume I., containing all of Act I. of *The Third Council*, held at Ephesus, A. D. 431. Pages lxxxix + 769. Price \$3.00. Volume II., *First Part*, containing all of Acts II. to VI., inclusive of the same Council. Pages 140, in paper. Price 75 cents. James Chrystal, publisher, 2 Emory Street, Jersey City, New Jersey, 1901.

In this work Mr. James Chrystal, a clergyman of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and a modest, but thoroughly competent scholar, in the State of New Jersey, has undertaken to do what no English scholar before him has ever undertaken, namely, to give to the English-speaking public a complete translation of the



Minutes of the Six Ecumenical Councils of the United Christian Church. Of the first two of these Councils, namely, those of Nicea, 325, and Constantinople, 381, nothing has come down to us except their creeds and canons. Of the remaining four the proceedings or minutes have been preserved in full. They have been published complete in the original languages, namely Greek and Latin; but no complete translation into any modern language has ever been undertaken before now. Hence to the great mass of students and ministers they have practically been inaccessible. For few, outside of the small number of professional scholars, keep up their knowledge of Greek and Latin sufficiently to read such a work with any degree of profit; and, besides, the great expense of it puts it absolutely beyond the reach of all but the most favored few. Mansi's *Concilia*, in thirty-one volumes, have been sold in America for as much as twelve hundred dollars, and Hardouin's, in twelve volumes, for two hundred and fifty dollars. Of course, few only among the ministry could afford such works in their libraries, no matter how zealous they might be in the study of church history. And even of the libraries of theological seminaries but a small number could keep such costly treasures on their shelves; and consequently but few ministers of the gospel have even known anything about them; and such ignorance as Mr. Chrystal affirms on the part of leading men in the Church of England is but natural.

Mr. Chrystal's plan involves the translation and publication, with copious notes, of all that remains of the Acts and Proceedings of the Six Councils, in about eight or ten volumes, which are to be sold to subscribers at \$3.00 a volume and to others at \$4.00. Thus far two volumes and a portion of a third have been published. The first volume contains all the genuine utterances of the Council of Nicea, namely, its Creed, its Conciliar Letter and its Canons. Two volumes will be devoted to the Council of Ephesus, of which the first and a part of the second are now lying before us. The other volumes will appear as soon as the means for their publication can be secured. The translation, we are told, is sufficiently far advanced to make possible the publication of one volume a year until the whole series shall have been completed. Of course such a work *does not pay*. The enterprise of translation and publication is not entered into for the sake of making money. The translator's work is all done gratuitously. But even the expense of printing and binding is not covered by the sale of the books, which must necessarily be limited, as the work appeals only to scholars. It has been necessary, therefore, to rely in part on the donations of friends of the cause. A number of Episcopalian and some Presbyterian ministers, and some laymen also, have made contributions to the publication fund. Why should not one or more wealthy men come forward and furnish the means for the speedy completion of so important a work, which interests

alike all denominations of Christians? We know of no way in which some of the thousands belonging to rich men, and which they do not know what to do with, could be spent more profitably.

This first volume on the Synod of Ephesus contains, beside a general introduction, in which the author gives a luminous account of the occasion and circumstances of the Synod, a complete report of its proceedings, from the opening on to the close of the first act, which ended in the sentence of deposition pronounced upon Nestorius by the assembled bishops. There is, first, a copy of the call of the emperors convoking the Synod, then a list of the names of the attending bishops, and then an account of the attempts made to induce Nestorius, who was in the neighborhood, on whose account the Synod was called, to attend its sessions. This was followed by the reading of a short letter addressed by Cyril of Alexandria to Nestorius, bearing upon his supposed heresy, and of the latter's reply. After this a letter was read from Celestine bishop of Rome, to Nestorius, reproaching him on account of his heresy, exhorting him to repentance and warning him of excommunication in case of non-compliance. This was followed by the reading of another, longer, letter from Cyril to Nestorius, in which the former discussed at length the subjects at issue between them, and endeavored to win the latter over to his own views. Next comes the report of a committee who had been sent with a final summons to Nestorius to appear before the Synod and submit to its decision, which, like the former summons, Nestorius refused to heed. The Synod next proceeded to the reading of the opinions of the Fathers bearing upon the questions before them, and then to the reading of certain "blasphemies" of Nestorius from a book on dogma. The reading of a letter from bishop Capreolus of Carthage was finally followed by the vote of the Synod and its sentence of deposition pronounced upon Nestorius. The first part of the second volume contains certain proceedings following the sentence of deposition, letters addressed to various parties, and finally a reading of a part of its proceedings in consequence of the arrival of certain delegates from Rome with a letter from Celestine addressed to the Synod. All this is intensely interesting to the student of ecclesiastical history, and is presented in a clear though literal translation, accompanied with numerous explanatory notes, bearing upon the meaning of Greek words and phrases, as well as upon the nature and consequences of the questions in debate. Indeed much the greater part of these volumes is made up of notes by the translator.

To the student of church history, such a work as this is invaluable, because he is thereby enabled "to go to the sources" without the pains and expense to which heretofore he has been subjected. And to go to the sources constitutes, as we know, the modern historical method. There is, indeed, a value and a satisfaction in this that can be derived from no mere second-hand

study. For instance to hear Cyril discussing his newly-invented term *theotokos* gives us an idea of his meaning which could be gotten from no mere second-hand report. The opinion has indeed commonly prevailed that, while Nestorius was in error in separating the two natures in Christ, Cyril also was wrong in pressing the idea of the *theotokos* unduly, and that this led to the idolatrous worship of the Virgin Mary. M. Chrystal, however, contends that *theotokos*, *deipara*, is not *mother of God*, *dei mater*, and does not necessarily have an heretical sense. The reading of Celestine's letter to Nestorius as well as that to the Synod gives us a better idea of the spirit and bearing of the Roman bishops at that time than any amount of discussion on papal supremacy could give us. The man who wrote those letters, while fully conscious of his position as head of the Roman church, had no feeling that he was head of the entire church of Christ, and that he could by his own will settle disputes and decide controversies in the territories and provinces of other bishops and metropolitans. Such a claim as that would not have been admitted at Ephesus for a moment. In Mr. Chrystal's view the decisions of the first six councils are authoritative for all time; hence his title for the whole work: *Authoritative Christianity*. He holds, moreover, that by the acts of Ephesus have been condemned once for all those heresies concerning transubstantiation, consubstantiation, real presence, creature worship, and ritualism, which have wasted the church in medieval and modern times. Had the heresiarchs and idolatrizers of the modern Anglo-Catholic movement not been ignorant of the authoritative decisions of the Synod of Ephesus in regard to the *anthropophagistic* errors of Nestorius, they would have builded up and not wasted the Church of England. "Newman, Pusey, and Keble," says Mr. Chrystal, "died utterly ignorant of the fact that they (the decisions of Ephesus) condemn all their traitorous worship of saints and images, and their new-fangled heresy of Two-Nature Consubstantiation, all errors against their own Anglican Formularies." We may not agree with Mr. Chrystal as to his conception of the authority that should be ascribed to the so-called Ecumenical Councils. In their acts and speeches we may find abundant evidence that their members were not infallible either individually or collectively. Hence we may not value the resolutions of those Councils as highly as Mr. Chrystal does, or suppose that the whole church must in the end come back to the position of those Councils in order to find the principle of its future union. Yet we can cordially sympathize with Mr. Chrystal in his hatred of the errors of those men who have so largely Romanized the Church of England and some other Protestant churches too; thank him heartily for the favor he has conferred upon all the churches in the undertaking of his great work; and bid him God-speed in the prosecution of it to an early completion.

**THE NIAGARA BOOK.** By W. D. Howells, Mark Twain, Professor Nathaniel S. Shaler and others. New and Revised Edition, with Remarkable Photographic Illustrations. Pages 353. Doubleday, Page & Co., New York, 1901. Price, \$1.20.

This is more than an ordinary guide-book. It is a guide-book, of course, and is intended to enable the visitor to Niagara to see this famous wonder to the best advantage in the shortest time. But it is also a natural history of Niagara. It tells the reader what Niagara is, as well as how to see it. It contains a complete account of the geology of the falls and of their history. It is a well-known fact that the fall is not stationary, but is slowly wearing its way up towards Lake Erie. Once it was situated miles below its present site, near Lake Ontario. How long has it taken to wear its way up to its present position? What are the geological strata through which it has cut its channel? How long will it be until it shall reach Lake Erie or end in a series of rapids between its present site and the Lake? If it shall reach the Lake, what would be the effect upon the water system and climate of North America? These are questions in which all intelligent persons are interested, whether they ever have been, or expect to be, visitors to Niagara or not. And these questions receive full consideration in this volume. Besides the geology of Niagara, we have presented therein an account of the fauna and flora of the islands in the river and of the surrounding country. To the student of natural history these are most interesting chapters. To the sightseer, on the other hand, the description of localities and the direction how to reach them will be of particular interest. All will be interested in the chapters relating to the history of the discovery of the Falls and to the legends and traditions connected with the place. The chapter on the utilization of Niagara's power will be of special interest to the economist. But the whole book from beginning to end, with its fine photographic illustrations, its fine paper and print and binding, will be interesting to all intelligent readers. The Falls of Niagara are one of the greatest natural wonders of the world, and all Americans who are able to do so, should by all means see them. But it would undoubtedly be a benefit to all prospective visitors to the Falls, if before starting on their journey, they would procure and read this book on Niagara. It would save them both money and time. Others who can not make this journey would, in the careful perusal of this work, find a good substitute for a journey. It would give them a better knowledge of Niagara than many get, who go to see Niagara without such help.

**THE PROTESTANT CHURCH IN GERMANY. A General Survey.** By Professor George H. Schodde, Ph.D. Pages 113. Lutheran Publication Society, 1424 Arch Street, Philadelphia, Pa. 1901. Price, 40 cents.

The author of this little volume is a Lutheran, and writes from a Lutheran standpoint. Lutheran thought is for him the measure

of all sound theological thinking. In his view Luther was right in his conduct with Zwingli at Marburg; and when he refused the hand of Zwingli with the words, "Ye have a different spirit than we," he uttered a great truth which history has confirmed. He was right also when he wrote upon the table before him, "This is my body," and refused to hear any argument or reason against his interpretation. In this way "he kept reason captive under faith"; and this, we are told, "has been the characteristic feature of the Lutheran Church at all times." This idea of keeping reason captive appears at different places in this little book. But captive to what? To one's own interpretation of Scripture, as if his reason had nothing to do with this operation? But according to the author's standpoint we find the Lutheran Church described as the Church of the Bible, the Church of the means of grace, and the Church of everything else that is good. "Over against both the Church of Rome and the Reformed Church the Lutheran at all times, as did Luther himself, has endeavored to maintain the Scriptures, and these alone as a basis for the whole ecclesiastical superstructure." And yet the Lutheran Church is not the Protestant Church of Germany. It is only one of the many churches which now occupy the ground there. This we learn from Professor Schodde himself. "Of the forty-six state churches twenty-four are Lutheran, eleven Reformed, seven United, and four Confederated." But the United and Confederated Churches have by far the largest number of members. "It is probably fair," we are told, "to claim for confessional Lutheranism about one-third of the Protestants of Germany." But, then, the Lutherans have furnished all the good theology for all the other churches. And yet "the Lutheranism of Germany at the present time is not itself the exact reproduction of the Lutheranism of the Reformation era. \* \* \* It too has shared in the development that the theological world has passed through during the intervening centuries." We presume the work under notice is intended mainly for Lutheran readers. Others, however, will find it interesting too. It contains a good deal of valuable statistical information in regard to practical Christianity in the German fatherland. But Ritschlian theologians will smile when they read that "the Ritschl school is really only an application of Kant's philosophy to theology."

**LENTENTIDE SERMONETTES.** By Joseph A. Seiss, D.D., LL.D. Pages 198. Evang. Luth. Church Pub. Board, 1523 Arch St., Philadelphia, 1901.

As the name indicates, this is a volume of sermonettes by Dr. Seiss, pastor of the Church of the Holy Communion, Phila. Being the work of one who is engaged in the active work of the pastorate, it is to be expected that such a volume as this would be practical and homiletical, rather than exegetical or theological.

In this expectation, the reader of these sermonettes will not be disappointed. Anyone of these sermons could be preached with profit to a Christian congregation, and one is safe in saying that it would be listened to with pleasure. Dealing, as they do, with practical questions, one will find in these sermonettes not only food for thought, but also hope for the hopeless, bread for the hungry, and comfort for the weary.

The author, in his preface, calls attention to the growing and widely extending attention that is given to Lent and Passiontide and the propriety of a proper observance of this season of the Church year. To this latter end he submits this volume of sermons to the Christian public. This reveals the purpose of the book. However, it might be said that these sermonettes of Dr. Seiss are adapted not only to the Lenten season, but to all the seasons of the year. For example, the sermon on "Faith the Measure of Success," based on Matt. 9, 29, may be preached as profitably during the Trinity season as during the season of Lent. The same may be said of nearly every one of the other twenty-five sermons in the book. Therefore, those who are in search of homiletical material or mental stimulus need not wait until Lent to read this book, but a careful perusal of it will afford them much help even now.

The style of these sermonettes is particularly clear and lucid. One is never at a loss to understand the author's meaning. In this respect they form a model that may well be imitated. Nor is there a long and involved introduction to be waded through before coming to the body of the sermon. Of course, the nature of a sermonette necessarily demands compactness, and if the preacher devotes five or ten minutes to the introduction, no time will be left for the body proper. Dr. Seiss does *not* sin in this respect for he immediately comes to the point without much ado. Herein lies another point worthy of imitation.

One of the tests of perspicuity is the ease with which a sermon may be analyzed. A single example will show the perspicuity and the manner of treatment in these sermonettes by Dr. Seiss: Subject, "The Treacherous Ailment;" text, John 5, 42, "I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." I. Genuine love versus hypocrisy. II. Grounds for the fear that the text applies to to-day; 1, worldliness; 2, neglect of the means of grace (*a*, Bible, *b*, prayer, *c*, worship, *d*, the sacraments); 3, defections of Christians. III. What is to be done? 1, Be honest with yourself; 2, confess it to God; 3, repent; 4, remember the judgment; 5, and finally, despair not, Jesus saves.

A proper use of these sermonettes, not a slavish imitation of them nor a wholesale "cribbing" from them, will cause this little volume to redound to the good of many a congregation, and thus to the glory of His service.

H. H. R.



THE REFORMATION DAWN. By F. V. N. Painter, A.M., D.D. Pages 245. Price 40 cents. Lutheran Publication Society, 1424 Arch Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

Dr. Painter is evidently one of a growing class of writers who are fearful lest the encroachments of Rome will finally undermine the Protestant Church. To prevent such a likelihood, Dr. Painter believes that Protestants should study anew the events which lead up to the division from Romanism, so that the errors of Catholicism may be combatted intelligently and successfully. It is with this end in view that "The Reformation Dawn" has been written and published. If it is true that there is a "turning toward Rome," which is often denied by Protestants, this work of Dr. Painter is most timely indeed.

The author approaches his subject calmly and judiciously. The violent ravings of many polemical writers on this subject are utterly lacking in this volume. Instead, the author presents in a scientific and scholarly way the facts as they existed in pre-Reformation times, and then leaves the reader to draw his own conclusions. Such a method can not help but lead to the firm conviction that the Protestant Reformation was not a mistake, but was a righteous and inevitable movement demanded, not only by the errors and tyranny of Rome, but also by the civil and religious progress of our race.

Dr. Painter describes the growth and organization of the Papacy, its doctrinal system and the evils which naturally and inevitably grew out of such a usurpation of power. To remedy these evils, several ineffectual efforts at reform were made before the Reformation. The speculative mystics, Aquinas, Ruysbroek, and Tauler, and the practical mystics, Groot, Thomas à Kempis, and Wessel, together with the Biblical reformers, Wycliffe, Huss, Jerome, and Savonarola, did much to stem the tide of evil in which the Papacy was floundering. The reforming councils of Pisa, Constance, and Basel helped to relieve the strain and defer "the evil day." But finally, the wickedness was too great for even such giants as these, and "reformation within the church" became only a cloak for still greater evil. Then the growth of national spirit, the Renaissance movement, and a few preliminary conflicts prepared the way for a beginning and the Reformation was on. All this Dr. Painter presents in a clear and concise manner without undue elaboration or detail. As a consequence, this makes a most excellent work for school, college, or family library.

H. H. R.

